Consolations

Addreſs'd to a

FRIEND

Upon the

DEATH

Of his Excellent and Pious

CONSORT.

Applicable alſo to a Reſentment of the Death of our late Gracious and Incomparable QUEEN.

By *Theophilus Dorrington.*

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ERRATA.

PAge 20. line 5. for *we* read *when*, page 28. line 21. read *Since.*

Conſo-

To my Worthy and much Eſteemed Friend Mr. J. T.

SIR,

WHEN it had pleas'd Almighty God to take from you, on the *16th.* of *January* laſt, your much lov'd and very pious Conſort, by that cruel Diſeaſe which has lately coſt ſeveral Nations ſo many Tears, for the Loſs of another Perſon, the Glory of her Sex: And when I perceiv'd you greatly diſtreſt with the weighty Affliction, I bethought my ſelf of what the wiſe Man ſays, That *a Friend is born for Adverſity.* And ſince I have been often comforted by your Kindneſs to me, I thought my ſelf oblig'd to try if I could contribute any thing towards your Support and Comfort in this Adverſity of yours.

While others then expreſs their acceptable Kindneſs by condoling your Loſs, but do therein, perhaps, but cheriſh and increaſe your Grief, I ſhall endeavour, what in me lies, to allay it. And this a very wiſe Man (*Plut.*) has taught me, is the beſt and moſt uſeful Office in ſuch a caſe, by theſe inge-

nious Expressions concerning this Matter. When Men see their Neighbour's House on Fire (says he) every one contributes what he can to quench it: But when they see the Mind inflam'd with furious Passion, they bring Fuel to nourish and increase the Flame. When a Man's Eye is in pain, he is not suffered to touch it, tho the Inflammation provoke him to it; nor will they that are near him meddle with it: But he who is gall'd with Grief, sits and exposes his Distemper to every one; and so that which at first seem'd but a slight Itching, or a trivial Smart, by much fretting and provoking, becomes a great, and almost incurable Disease. As he said to his wife and vertuous Wife, to whom these things were directed, that he knew very well she would arm her self against these Inconveniences; so I can hope the same of you, and am thereby encourag'd to contribute what I am able towards your Assistance to do so.

And I must confess, that I found it necessary to my self, by such Meditations as these that follow, to relieve my own drooping Mind, deeply afflicted with the inestimable Loss which our unhappy Nation has lately sustain'd, of two glorious publick Persons; For the Sake of whose Piety, and Virtue, and Zeal for the Church, and the Glory of God; and by the means of whose Wisdom and Authority, we hoped to see good and

hap-

happy Days. But of theſe Perſons our World was not worthy, and God has taken them to himſelf. And ſince I muſt be ſenſible of this Loſs, and the Occaſion of your excellent Conſorts Death has drawn me in to ſpeak my Senſe of it too, I think it moſt proper, while ſo many endeavour to flatter and feed the publick Grief and mine; to do what I can to moderate and allay it; this Part to be ſure I find moſt Eaſe in, and perhaps ſo may ſome others too, amongſt whom I eſpecially hope Sir that you may be one.

May it pleaſe God long to preſerve and proſper the Light which is yet left us, that our Hopes may yet live too, and that we be not brought into utter Darkneſs. And when Age ſhall have tranſlated him late to Heaven, may the Royal Family then afford, and never want, a worthy Succeſſor to fill the Throne of theſe Kingdoms; A Perſon good as Guardian Angels, and forgiving; juſt, to afford the Subject all their due rights; Zealous to maintain and defend the beſt Church, and in the Practice of the beſt Religion in the World; That ſo Peace and Truth may yet find an Eſtabliſhment among us, and may continue and flouriſh here ſo long as the Sun and the Moon endure. This Wiſh I know Sir is very grateful and ſuitable to you, as it is to all good Engliſhmen, and good Chriſtians among us.

That it may pleaſe God thus to bleſs us, I further wiſh that we may all be juſt and duly obedient to the good Government which is now over us; and that none may treacherouſly endeavour to take Advantage of the Goodneſs to undermine the Power of it: And that we may all very ſeriouſly practice our holy Religion, according to the wiſe and pious Eſtabliſhment of it among us. For it is certainly to be expected, that if we deſpiſe theſe Bleſſings, and do not make this uſe of them, God will deprive us of them again; And then will far more terrible and fatal Woes and Miſeries befall us, than thoſe which puniſh'd thoſe Sins in the time of our Fathers; which God of his Infinite Mercy forbid for the Sake of Jeſus Chriſt, and let all the People ſay, *Amen.*

The Paſſions allowable.

That Sect of Philoſophers among the Heathen, who requir'd a total Extinction of all the Paſſions in Men, as a point of Wiſdom, and a means of Happineſs, were ſtiffly oppos'd in this by others of their own time; and have been generally condemned in all Ages ſince, and, I doubt not, very juſtly.

Among Created Beings, at leaſt, there is not one to which ſome things are not in their own Nature Good and Agreable, and others

others Adverſe and Evil. That is good to all which is preſervative of their Nature, and that is Evil which tends to deſtroy it. And as all things, in this lower World eſpecially, are liable to change and alter, ſo there are other things by which that Alteration may be effected. And 'tis the Glory of the divine Wiſdom and Power, to preſerve and maintain this mutable World, notwithſtanding that it is an Aggregate, and Collection of things which are mutable, and that dwell among other things which are capable of being the Cauſes of their Mutation.

This being the general State of things in this World, Mankind are not exempted from it while they abide here. But ſince we are capable to underſtand what is Good and what is Evil; what is ſerviceable to cheriſh, protect and preſerve our Being, and what tends to deſtroy it; and all underſtanding Beings are naturally poſſeſt with a Deſire to preſerve themſelves: It cannot be but we muſt proportionably hate that which is Evil and Adverſe, and love that which is favourable and good. And then it muſt be reckon'd natural to us to deſire what we apprehend to be Good, if we do not at preſent enjoy it; to hope for it if there be good Probabilities that we may attain it: And to rejoyce and be pleas'd when we do

attain it. And on the contrary, it muſt be natural to us to be averſe to whatever we apprehend is Evil: To fear it while it threatens and is likely to come upon us: To be grieved and troubled when it befals us, and when we cannot get rid of it. Our Paſſions, then, are certainly as natural to us as any of our Faculties, and do neceſſarily follow our Underſtanding and Will, and our Knowledge of Good and Evil: And as that were certainly a ſick Stomach, which ſhould feel no Hunger or craving when it were empty of Food; and that a numm'd and diſeaſed Member, which would feel no Pain when it were burnt or wounded; ſo it were a Stupidity, and a Diſeaſe of the Mind, a State preternatural to it, not to have a ſuitable Reſentment of the Good or Evil that befalls us. It ſpeaks Ignoranec and Folly for a Man to ſuffer things contrary to his Intereſts without any Trouble or Concern for them; and it is certainly no Happineſs to enjoy things in their own Nature good and agreeable to us, without conceiving ſome Joy, and taking ſome Delight therein.

And if the Paſſions are Natural to us, they are neither evil in themſelves nor ſuperfluous; as we muſt needs allow, who know that we have derived our Nature from an Author who is infinitely Wiſe and Good.

Good. If they are natural to us, they are not inconſiſtent with Virtue, or elſe we muſt believe that our Nature is uncapable of Virtue. And, then too, Virtue does not conſiſt in the rooting them out, but only in the Government of them. Virtue muſt chuſe the Objects which they regard, and aſſign the due Meaſures of acting about them. Fortitude muſt hinder us from fearing where there is no juſt Occaſion to fear: It ſuppreſſes an anxious diſtracting Fear when an Evil is imminent; which are Exceſſes of this Paſſion; but it does not forbid a Cautious and careful Fear, of an evident Evil which is likely to fall upon us; ſuch as will put us upon an Endeavour to make the beſt Defence againſt it that we can. And Patience does not forbid all Senſe of the Evils that befal us; but it forbids a froward or a dejected Senſe of them; an exceſſive Anger, or exceſſive Sorrow for them; according to what the Divine Wiſdom directs in the Caſe: *My Son, deſpiſe not thou the Chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* The Wiſdom of Vertue muſt direct us to love none but true Goods, and to hate none but real Evils; and to proportion rightly our Love and Hatred to the Merits of the Object, ſo as to value moſt the beſt Goods, and chiefly to dread the moſt grievous Evils. Yea, fur-

ther,

ther, it is moſt certain, that Virtue in many Caſes does require the Exerciſe of our Paſſions. Does not the Love of our Country require us to wiſh it Proſperity and Welfare, and to grieve for any great Calamity that befals it? Were it not the Savageneſs of a Wild Beaſt, to love no one but our ſelves? And if we love any others, we muſt be proportionably ſenſible of their Intereſts or Harms. Does not Mercy and Goodneſs require, that we feel Compaſſion and Pity for thoſe who are in Miſery, and that we have ſome Sympathy with their Grief? All manner of Virtue does require, that we be angry at the contrary Vices, and eſpecially with our ſelves when we are guilty of them. Our Virtues are often exerciſed in the Exerciſe of our Paſſions, and cannot ſubſiſt or be without them.

And if our Paſſions are Natural to us, then the utter Extinction of them, if this could be, would deſtroy ſomewhat in us of our Nature; but what does in any Meaſure deſtroy our Nature, that is evil, and then this cannot be reckon'd to make us happy. To deſtroy theſe utterly, were to deprive our ſelves of the Capacity to take Delight and Pleaſure in any good things that we ſhould enjoy; and with the Stoical Indolence, we could have at the beſt but the Happineſs of a Poſt or a Stone; not the Happineſs of a Rational

Rational Creature, not that of a Man. And if there were really no Happineſs in deſtroying theſe, then certainly it is not any Point of Wiſdom to endeavour and labour after it.

Chriſtian Religion, which is a Body of the wiſeſt Precepts, and contains the moſt perfect Rules of Virtue, and is the ſureſt Guide to Happineſs, does allow the Being and Exerciſe of our Paſſions. It gives us indeed Directions concerning the Objects of them, and the Meaſures which we may allow; But it does no where forbid all Exerciſe of them. In thoſe ſacred Writings which are the Fountain of it, we find thoſe condemn'd who are *without Natural Affection*, among the ſpiteful and the Proud. And we have ſuch Precepts as theſe very frequent there: *Set your Affections on things above, not on things on the Earth:* Which does not oblige us to have no Affections at all, but only to employ them chiefly about the Objects that are moſt worthy of them. It is ſaid, *Be angry and ſin not, Let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath*; that is, let not your Anger riſe to that Exceſs, as to carry you to any evil thing; nor let it laſt ſo long, as to degenerate into Hatred or Malice. Yet is Hatred of ſome things requir'd, as when we are bid to abhor that which is evil. Sorrow for our Faults and

Sins,

Sins, is encourag'd with the Promise of Reward; it is said, *Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted.* We are bid to *love our Neighbour as our selves:* Which allows both the Desire of his Welfare, and Delight in it; and also some Grief and Trouble for that which happens to him contrary to his Welfare; and Compassion to his Miseries and Calamities. And we are commanded to *Love God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Might,* which is certainly most highly due to him, who is the most excellent Being, and the Fountain of all Good. And this requires the agreeing Exercises of other Passions.

The Necessity of governing the Passions.

But while I thus endeavour to do right to our Nature, in vindicating the Exercise of our Passions; I must take care that I do no Prejudice to our Virtue and Happiness, by giving Encouragement to a boundless exercise of them. It must be added therefore that since our Nature is now depraved, and out of Order; these are very apt to exceed their due Bounds, and to transgress the Rules of Reason and Vertue. And as there is no Wisdom, Vertue or Happiness in a total Extinction of them, so neither is any of these consistent with the Abandoning our selves to any of them. When they are only

only Indulg'd and not regulated, they degenerate into Vices; they will make us guilty of innumerable Follies, and utterly deprive us of our Happineſs: Under the Dominion, of Vice and exorbitant Paſſion, the great and dignified Perſons diſhonour themſelves; the Lovers of Pleaſure procure themſelves much Torment and Pain; and the covetous condemn themſelves to the Miſeries of an Eternal Poverty.

It ſullies and eclypſes the Glory of him who is great and dignified, to appear enſlav'd to Vice, and habitually ſubject to inordinate Paſſions: He that would have others pay him due Reverence, muſt reverence himſelf; and maintain his Grandeur, by appearing to have his Mind as much elevated above the common vulgar Diſorders in common Accidents, as his Condition is exalted above theirs. And if he would have others obedient to his Laws, he muſt himſelf be obedient to the Laws of Religion and Virtue. For the unruly World, who are always loth to be governed, and are ready to ſeek Pretences to diminiſh Authority, and to with-hold their Obedience, will ſoon grow jealous that he will not govern them according to Juſtice and Reaſon, who does not govern himſelf ſo; and ſo his Authority will grow weak, as his Vices and Paſſions become ſtrong and predominant.

He

He to his Passion Laws must give,
Who would at Fame and Power arrive;
And who would others subject have,
Must not to servile Vice himself enslave.

The vicious Nero, *tho adorn'd*
With Empires, Purple Robes and State,
With his own wretched Hands his Fate
Inflicts, by all Men justly loath'd and scorn'd.

All Vices and ungovern'd Passions, are the very painful and shameful Diseases of the Mind, and by Consequence must needs be inconsistent with true Happiness. The Exercises of them are liable to the just Rebukes of our Reason, and commonly meet with them either in the doing or soon after: So they vex a Man with the Pain and Torment of a wounded Conscience. The being conscious (says the Philosopher) of having done a wicked Action, leaves Stings of Remorse behind it, which like an Ulcer in the Flesh, makes the Mind smart with perpetual Wounds: For Reason (says he) which chases away other Pains, creates Repentance, confounds the Soul with Shame, and punishes it with Torment: And if the Mind be disordered and uneasie, no external Circumstances, however abounding with Matter of Delight, and however elevated and glorious they are, can give a Man Content and Tranquility.

quility. As the Philoſopher ingeniouſly teaches us, by admoniſhing his Friend to remember, that a rich embroider'd Slipper cannot eaſe a Fit of the Gout, nor an Imperial Diadem the Headach.

The fawning Flatterer, in vain,
Shall ſtrive to ſooth the inward ſmarting Pain,
Of a Mind ſick with guilty Fears,
Which from her own deſerv'd Rebukes ſhe bears.

He who will guilty Pleaſures court,
Shall find the pleaſing Entertainment ſhort,
And when that's gone he'll further find,
A far more laſting Sting is left behind.

Juſt as th' induſtrious angry Bee,
Spoil'd of her hoarded wealth injuriouſly,
Corrects the Rifler of her Hive,
And a ſmart Sting does with her Honey give.

Ungovern'd Deſire after Pleaſure, Wealth, or Honour, is like a Hunger ever craving, and a Thirſt which can never be ſatisfied; It gives the wretched Soul no reſt; It is an utter Stranger to Content; It ſours the Reliſh of what is poſſeſt, through eager Longings after more. The Unhappineſs of the Man enſlav'd to this Paſſion, is well expreſt by the excellent *Boetius*.

If Plenty from her teeming Horn,
As many Blessings on the Wretch should pour,
As there are Sands upon the briny Shoar,
Or Stars in Heav'n, before the Gaudy Morn,
In the Triumphal Chariot of the Day,
Appears from far upon the Eastern Way;
Yet would not the unhappy Man
Cease to complain;
But with his clamorous Cries,
He would importune Heaven and pierce the Skies.

Altho' his Prayers do reach th' Almighty's Ear,
Tho' with Success he crown his Vows,
Tho Wealth and Honour on him he confer;
Yet Cares his Mind, and Clouds possess his Brows,
He thinks his present Blessings Poor,
And wildly gapes, and ever calls for more.
What Curb, or what Commanding Rein,
Can e're his Wishes within just Bounds restrain!
Since when full Streams of Blessings on him flow,
His Thirst does still increase, and his Desire still grow,
He never can be rich with greatest Store,
Woo thinks himself, amidst his Wealth, but poor.

If we have not our Passions at our own Command, we shall not have the Tranquility of our Minds ever in our own Power; it will be subject to every thing about us, and continually expos'd, and every other Person that will may disturb our Minds. *He that has no Rule over his own Spirit* (says Solomon) *is like a City broken down and without Walls.* Such a Man will be very easily disturb'd

ſturb'd, and very frequently; they that Hate him, know how whenever they pleaſe to hurt, yea to make him hurt himſelf. All our Enjoyments in this World are mutable and periſhing; and are of a very uncertain duration and poſſeſſion; and the ungoverned Mind, then, muſt needs be often grievouſly afflicted with their change, and their forſaking of us, or elſe always with the uneaſie Fears and Expectations of it. Our Lot and Fortune in this World is not at our own diſpoſe, nor can we form it according to the Model of our Wiſhes. We are entirely under the Government of another, who chuſes it for us, and diſpoſes of us as he pleaſes; and he is the Great and Rightful Governour of the World. But what a Folly is it then for us to indulge vehement Deſires to obtain that which we want, or to keep that which we have, when we are uncertain whether we ſhall obtain our Deſire or not; And what a rack and torment is a vehement and fierce Deſire when diſappointed! That indifferency towards all things that are mutable, and that are not in our own Power, which the Divine Wiſdom directs us to, is our plain Intereſt; and that is a Precept of Tranquility, which the Apoſtle gives us when he ſays, *The Faſhion of this World paſſes away.* Therefore ſhould *they that have Wives, be as though*

they had none; they that weep, as if they wept not: they that rejoyce, as tho they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as if they poſſeſt not. His meaning is, that our Paſſions ſhould be but moderately engag'd about all theſe things; and we ſhould not ſuffer them to tranſport us by their changes, either with Joy or Sorrow: The variety and changes of ungovern'd Paſſions create us a great deal of diſcontent and trouble. Now we vehemently deſire what we have not, and are toſt with reſtleſs Fears or Hopes till we enjoy: When that which we deſire is obtain'd, we in a little time as vehemently diſdain it. We ſpend and exhauſt our Spirits in exceſſive Joy and Tranſport, and then ſink into Melancholy and Sadneſs. While we dote on what we enjoy, we afflict our ſelves with Fears of loſing it; when our fond Paſſion is pall'd and grows Cold, as ſuch an one is moſt apt to do, then is our Enjoyment a Burden, and our Pleaſure a Drudgery; and we can never be contented till we are deliver'd from it. Thus reſtleſs, uneaſie, and always unhappy is the fooliſh ungovern'd Mind.

That well-poiz'd Soul who in a ſettled ſtate
Can triumph over his uncertain Fate:
Who unconcern'd Fortune in Smiles View,
Or fearleſs can behold her clouded Brow;
No raging Sea ſhall move him, nor prevail,
Againſt his Peace, though the proud Billows ſwel;

Though

Though black Veſuvio, too, with them conſpire,
And vomit his Auxiliary Fire:
Tho hovering Clouds their fierceſt Thunders weild,
To which ſtout Oaks, hard Rocks, and Tow'rs muſt yield.
He who nor fears, nor hopes for any thing,
Diſarms the greateſt Tyrants Rage, and is himſelf a King.
But that weak Wretch, who his unguarded Breaſt,
To the Aſſaults of Paſſion does expoſe;
Can never know the Happineſs of Reſt,
Nor e'er himſelf enjoy in calm Repoſe.
Poor Mortal! he within himſelf ſhall feel, (Ill.
Storms, Thunders, Fires, and Racks, and every painful

Theſe things evidently demonſtrate the abſolute Neceſſity of governing our Paſſions, and bringing them into Subjection to the Laws of Religion and Virtue. Though we are not bound to deſtroy, yet neither may we pamper and indulge them. We muſt watch them with a Jealous Eye, to prevent their Extravagancies; we muſt very ſparingly adminiſter what is Food or Fuel to them, leſt they get more Strength than we can maſter. We muſt always remember they are good Servants but bad Maſters: They may be uſeful to us in their Exerciſes while we command them, but they will torment, hurt and diſparage us, if we let them reign over us. They are like Rebellious and Wicked Subjects in a Common-wealth, who, though very apt to complain of Rigour and hard Uſage, and

Arbitrary Proceeding in the Rulers while they are ſubject; yet if they can lift themſelves into the Government, they become the moſt Rigorous and Arbitrary Rulers, and the fierceſt Tyrants that are. We theſe are ſuppreſt and kept in their right Place and Order, all will be at Peace; but when they have too much Power, they put all things into Trouble and Confuſion.

Grief for the Death of Relations juſtified.

I may come now to apply what has been ſaid of the Affections in general, to the Paſſion of Sorrow in particular. Though this indeed has been moſt perſecuted by Philoſophy, yet even this too muſt be allow'd its Exerciſe upon a juſt Occaſion. And it muſt be granted, that the ſad Occaſion which we commemorate, deſerves and will juſtifie one of the greateſt Degrees of it. Love to the Perſon departed muſt needs give one a tender Senſe of what happens to her in Death; and it muſt be a Grief to conſider the Pain and Inconveniences of Sickneſs; the Spoil and Havock which Death makes; how it blaſts that Beauty, and eclipſes all thoſe pleaſing Charms which were once a Man's chief Delight. To conſider, that ſhe is by Death taken from all the pleaſant things that ſhe enjoy'd, and took Delight in here;

and

and muſt needs be ſhut into a Grave, and left to Worms and Corruption.

Love to others will allow us to grieve in ſuch a Caſe as this, for the Loſs which they have ſuſtained. When we conſider how uſeful, how neceſſary ſhe was to the World in the Place ſhe held; what a Faithful and Prudent Friend ſome have loſt; what a Kind and Good Neighbour others; what a Charitable Perſon the Poor; what a Skilful and Careful Helper the Sick have loſt: What an Honourable Member the Church, and what an Excellent Example and a Promoter of Piety and Virtue the World is deprived of in the Death of our Friend. We find the Bleſſed Jeſus himſelf weeping at the Death of *Lazarus*, in Compaſſion and Sympathy with thoſe who lamented the Death of their Friend (*John* 11.)

And in the laſt place, the Senſe of a Man's own Loſs in the Perſon deceaſed, may juſtly give him ſome Sorrow for her Death, as a great Affliction to himſelf: When he is herein deprived of a Pleaſing Companion, a Faithful Friend, a very Tender Helper, one that was ſenſible of all things that happen'd to him, and bore a Part in his Grief, and encreas'd his Joys. One that ſtudied to oblige and pleaſe him, and that took kindly and was always pleas'd with his Endeavours to oblige and pleaſe her. One that

Pleaſantly received all the Expreſſions of his Love, and requited them with the beſt Returns which ſhe could make of her own: One that ſet her ſelf in her Place, to promote the Intereſts, the Honour of her Husband, and to ſoften the Toils and Cares of Life to him. Such a Conſort, it is a great Bleſſing of Heaven for a Man to enjoy, and a great Affliction to loſe: And ſuch a Loſs he may certainly be allow'd to attend with a very paſſionate Reſentment. As Philoſophy would forbid this in vain, ſo Chriſtian Religion juſtly allows us a moderate Grief for the Death of Excellent Perſons, and thoſe that are peculiarly dear to us.

The Neceſſity of moderating our Sorrow.

But whatever the Perſon Deceaſed was in her ſelf, to others, or to me (a Man ſhould ſay to himſelf) there is nothing will juſtifie ſuch a Degree of Grief as ſhall rob me of my Virtue, or diſparage my Religion, or as will hurt me in my Health or my Affairs. It is not at all fitting or reaſonable that my having loſt the Uſe and Comfort of her Wiſdom and Virtue, ſhould make me loſe my own too; or, that becauſe I now want her Help in my Affairs, I ſhould therefore neglect them my ſelf. I ſhould rather now excite all that is within me, becauſe I have

no

no one now to rely upon but my ſelf. A Man ſhould ſay to himſelf then, though I may grieve on ſuch an Occaſion, yet I may not abandon my ſelf to Sorrow, I muſt command and regulate my Grief, and endeavour to keep it from Exceſs. It muſt not be only indulg'd and cheriſh'd leſt it deſtroy me; and do become, as it may, a heavier burden, and a greater Affliction than that which I lament. Sorrow ſhould be regarded as a weak effeminate Paſſion, and be left to Women or Children, or Childiſh low ſpirited Men; as unfit to be allow'd in a great Spirit, or a wiſe Man, to a great degree: And if ſuch an one be ſurpriſed and tranſported at the firſt Aſſault beyond a Decorum on a great Occaſion, and when Virtue it ſelf may be ſaid to betray him into it, and require a great Reſentment; yet he ought not to ſuffer the feeble Paſſion long to maintain its Tyranny. He muſt not let it alone in its Exceſs, but endeavour to Curb it, and recover himſelf as ſoon as he can. He muſt not endure a Thought, that this ſhall be the ſetled Habit and State of his Mind: This were to loſe his Virtue, and his Peace, to bind a needleſs heavy Burden upon himſelf; and to do more towards his own Affliction, than the Loſs he ſuſtains could do. And certainly 'tis very fooliſh, that a Man ſhould reſolve to Afflict

himſelf more, becauſe the Providence of God has afflicted him much; or that becauſe his Burden is heavy, he ſhould make it heavier.

An exceſſive Sorrow proceeds from a falſe and deprav'd Notion of the thing which is loſt, which is a diſparagement to him that is in Reputation for Wiſdom: When this is ſetled and abiding, it ſhews the fond Heart was extreamly ſet upon the feeble and mutable Good; that mighty Expectations of great and long Happineſs were built upon the Enjoyment of it: That the wretched Man did not conſider the true Nature of the thing, but doted on a mortal Being, with an Affection intended to be Immortal. He indeed when he was firſt join'd to his loſt Friend, ſpoke of being parted from her by Death, as that which was to be expected, but forgot it again: It is excellent Advice to this purpoſe, which the Philoſopher gives (*Epict. cap.* 8.) of every thing that Delights you, or ſerves to your uſe, be ſure to conſider the Nature, and remember what ſort of thing it is: If you are fond of a curious Glaſs, always remember it is but a Glaſs; and then when that is broken, you will not break your Peace for it: If it be a Child, or a Wife you greatly Love, then remember, 'tis a mortal Creature; ſo you will not be kill'd with Grief your ſelf when ſuch an one dies.

Wiſ-

Wiſdom requires the due proportion of our Affections, and that they be ſuitable to the Worth of the Object; and Men firſt tranſgreſs the Laws of that in their Love, in their Delight, and Joy while they poſſeſs; and then they do ſo again in their Sorrow when they loſe.

And if it be unfit for a Wiſe Man to harbour and cheriſh an immoderate Sorrow upon any occaſion, it is much rather ſo to one that bears the glorious Name of a Chriſtian. He pretends to be a follower of Jeſus, the Captain of our Salvation, who was made perfect through Sufferings: Who endur'd with Invincible Patience many Evils and Afflictions, and has left us an Example that we ſhould follow his Steps. Who has ſaid, *He that will be my Diſciple, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs, and follow me.* If a Man's Mind be dejected with Grief for his Affliction, he does not bear his Croſs, but ſinks and fails under it. Let us ſay then to our ſelves, Shall I pretend to be a Diſciple of Jeſus, and not learn of him? Or do I give him the Honour of a Maſter when I do not obey his Precepts? And did not the holy, innocent Jeſus, meet with much Affliction in this World? How then can I expect to eſcape it? Man is born to Trouble: This preſent

State

State is curſed by reaſon of Sin; and innumerable Evils ſurround us all: The larger our Poſſeſſions are, the more vexations we are liable to, becauſe we have the more to loſe. We muſt be contented, then, to bear a ſhare in the common Fate; and may the more reaſonably bear it with Patience, becauſe all Calamity and Affliction was brought into the World by Sin; and becauſe even Jeſus himſelf has born it patiently, and requires us to do ſo too. Say then as a devout Perſon to himſelf:

Shall I expect an eaſie Life,
With Plenty ſtor'd, and free from Strife;
When, deareſt Lord, thy Days and Nights
Were paſt in Poverty and Fights?

Shall I require a gentle Death,
Juſt ſinging out an aged Breath;
When cruel Tortures from thee tore
Thy bleſſed Soul, all drown'd in Gore?

Oh no! our Chriſtian Sacrifice
Oft acting in a ſweet diſguiſe,
My Saviour's Paſſion o'er again,
Muſt all ſuch fond Conceits reſtrain.

This muſt keep lively in my Mind,
How I ought ſtill to be reſign'd:
This humble Pattern muſt deſtroy
All my immoderate Grief and Joy.

Ref. Devot.

We

We have a conſtant Memorial of our Saviour's Sufferings in the Sacrament of his Supper, and we ought to be thereby animated to patient and courageous Suffering. And we may, to encourage and ſupport our ſelves, conſider that the Time of enduring the Evils of this Life is but ſhort: That if we ſuffer with Chriſt, that is, patiently and humbly, we ſhall hereafter reign with him; and theſe light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, ſhall work for us an Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory.

It exceedingly augments our Miſery to abandon our ſelves to Sorrow for any Affliction: This Paſſion will be a grievous Burden to the Mind, will diſtract and confound all our Thoughts, and fill us with a very ſenſible, inward Pain. It has, too, a very Malignant Influence on the Body, and Fatally depreſſes the Spirits, and deſtroys a Man's Health. The Wiſe Man ſays, *A Merry Heart does good, like a Medicine, but a broken Spirit dries the Bones*, (Prov. 17. 22.) The Paſſions of Love, Hope, Joy, Chear the Mind, recreate the Body, and maintain Health; but Hatred, Fear, Anger, Sadneſs, contract the Heart, are like a ſubtle inward Poiſon. The *Thracian* Phyſicians are ſaid to have cured ſome Diſeaſes with Philoſophical Diſcourſes: (*Euſeb. Nieremb. de Art. Volunt.*) All Phyſicians preſcribe

ſcribe a Chearful Mind to all ſorts of Patients. Great is the influence of the Mind upon the Body, in its ſtrong and laſting Paſſions eſpecially. And by the Inordinacy of this Paſſion, ſome have utterly loſt the Uſe of their Reaſon, ſome have contracted very Painful and Incurable Diſeaſes, and ſome it has diſpatch'd with a haſty, untimely Death. A Man ſhould ſay then to himſelf; My extream Sorrow for my deceaſed Relation, will never be able to bring her back again, but it may haſten me after her; And why ſhould I precipitate a frail, ſhort Life? If Death be a very grievous and evil thing, why ſhould I haſten to it? If it be not ſo, why ſhould it coſt me an exceſſive Sorrow for that it has overtaken my Friend.

Why ſhould I entertain ſad Thoughts,
Whence nought but Perturbation flows;
Since they procure not what I wiſh,
They muſt not hinder my Repoſe?

I'll try this Remedy to charm,
And keep my Paſſions calm and ſtill;
I'm neareſt Help by Hope in God,
And Reſignation to his Will. Pſal. 43. Patr.

It was altogether an Exceſs of this Paſſion, which tranſported the Heathens to cut and disfigure, and abuſe themſelves when any one died whom they dearly lov'd; and it

it is a barbarous, unreaſonable Cuſtom which is ſtill among ſome of them, that near Relations, and even Slaves and Servants muſt die for Company. The wiſe and good Law of God forbad the Jews to hurt or mangle and disfigure themſelves for the Dead (*Lev.* 19. 20. *Deut.* 14. 1.) much leſs would he allow them to kill themſelves. Such cruel Cuſtoms the Adverſary of Mankind may ſuggeſt, who is the Author of many of thoſe uſed among the Heathens: But the God of Love is not for multiplying our Griefs and Calamities: As he does not delight to afflict us, ſo neither is he pleas'd to ſee us needleſly afflict our ſelves. And though this Cuſtom of wounding and abuſing themſelves, was common among the Heathens; yet we find the Wiſe and Learned among them, utterly condemning it. The excellent *Plutarch*, (*Conſolat. to his Wife*) commends his Conſort, for that ſhe had not complied with the common and fooliſh Cuſtom, at the Funeral of a very dear and well beloved Child. They who were preſent at the Funeral (ſays he) report, that you neither put on Mourning, nor disfigured your ſelf nor any of your Maids: And a Virtuous Woman (he ſays) ought not only to preſerve her Purity in Riotous Feaſts, but alſo to think with her ſelf, that the Tempeſts of the Mind, in violent Grief,

Griefs, must be calm'd with Patience. The Exercise of which, Virtue does not Intrench on the Natural Affection which Parents ought to have for their Children; but only oppoſes and prevents the disorderly and irregular Passions of the Mind. And he afterwards sharply condemns them who did torment and punish themselves in such Cases.

This Passion, if indulged, settles in the Mind a sullen Habit of Melancholy and Discontent. A Temper of Mind uneasie to itself, and uncomfortable to all about a Man: It will make him froward, and impatient, hard to be pleas'd, apt to take things amiss from God and Men. Either in a dull Silence, he sits tormenting himself with vain, but painful Thoughts; or he torments his Company with his passionate Complaints. He falls out with every thing else as well as with himself; disdains all the Pleasures and Enjoyments of his Life. This Inconvenience, says the same Philosopher (*ib.*) condemning it, is accompanied with a Neglect of the Body, a Carelesness of Anointing and Bathing, with whatsoever else relates to the Elegancy of Humane Life. It so Enervates the Mind that, quite dejected and beset with Grief, the Poor Wretch dares not be merry, or see the Light, or to Eat and Drink in Company.

It

It will ſo diſ-ſpirit a Man, that he can undertake nothing, but with a heavy Liſtleſneſs, he may come to neglect his moſt important Affairs, and then to one Loſs ſuſtain'd, he pulls upon himſelf many more, and will, in a little Time, it may be, have more Reaſon to lament his exceſſive Grief, than he had to lament the Occaſion of it. It tends to make a Man uſeleſs and unprofitable in his Place; and ſo, while Death has depriv'd his Neighbours and Relations of the Uſefulneſs and Comfort of his deceaſed Conſort: His Sorrow does in a manner deprive them of him too.

But the moſt fatal Miſchief of all, and yet a common Effect of an indulg'd and immoderate Sorrow, is, that it damps and weakens the Love of God, and cramps all the Exerciſes of that. His Devotions are diſtracted, are dull, and either neglected, or performed without that incomparable Pleaſure and Delight which they might afford him: His angry and fretful Thoughts at the Diſpenſations of Divine Providence, hinder him from all Delight in God; and thus, becauſe he has loſt the Communion of a lov'd Creature, he loſes too the more pleaſant Communion of God; and becauſe he does no longer enjoy his Earthly Friend, he can take no Delight in his Heavenly one; the Loſs of that which he could not always

enjoy here, loſes him, through his own Default, the Felicity which he might always enjoy.

So much Reaſon there is, that no Man ſhould indulge this Paſſion, or abandon himſelf to it. The greateſt Grief we can entertain, will never mend our Condition, but a great Grief will certainly make it ſtill worſe. Eſpecially, ſhould we take care that it may never deſtroy our Hope and Truſt in the Gracious, Ever-living God. Let the excellent Temper of the Pſalmiſt preſcribe to us, in all Afflictions, which he expreſſes in *Pſal.* 86.

Lord, bow thine Ear to my Requeſts,
Tho Poor, and in the Duſt;
O ſave my righteous Soul, for Lord,
In thee alone I truſt.

Be merciful to me, O God,
And hear my Mournful Voice;
Daily my Soul to thee aſcends,
Oh, make it to rejoyce.

Thou, Lord, art gracious and good,
To pardon Sins enclin'd:
And all that humbly thee implore,
Shall plenteous Mercy find.

To thee I call in my Distress,
In hope thou wilt attend;
On thee with Patience wait till thou
A Gracious Answer send. Patr. Translat.

The Means to Moderate our Sorrow.

And if upon these Accounts the Sorrowful Person does resolve to Curb and Govern his Passion, that he may not be subject to a cause of so much Misery and Sin: He must to this purpose speedily, and without any delay, set himself about it; such a Disposition of Mind cannot be too soon removed: And besides, It will be the easier done, if he goes about it before it is settled in his Mind, and be confirm'd into an Habit of Discontent and Melancholy. In this mutable State of things we shall have frequent occasion for Sorrow; and if a Man indulges this Passion, and lets it stay as long as it will with him, the Resentment of one Affliction will be very likely to last till our Sorrow is renew'd by another: But what a Miserable Life would such a Man condemn himself to, who would have no lucid or chearful Intervals of Life.

And when a Man has brought himself to this Wise and Necessary Resolution, that he will divorce himself without delay, from

a Companion so Mischievous and Troublesome, he must deny himself the Musing alone, and in Sad Silence upon his Affliction, and must not let his Thoughts dwell upon the Aggravations of it. The Sick Mind, if neglected, will suggest every thing that may be an Aggravation of our Loss, and entertain it self only with such Thoughts, and so feed its Distemper thereby: Just as a vitiated Appetite makes People long for and most pleased with that which is Unwholsome Food, and tends to continue or increase the Disease. But especially must this sort of Entertainment be avoided, because the Mind, when troubled, is apt to afflict it self with Imaginary Aggravations of that which troubles it: And will sometimes oppress the dejected Spirits with the uneasie Fears of Consequences that cannot, or are very unlikely to come to pass. We do sometimes find more trouble in the Opinion that we have of an Evil, than we ever find in the Effects of it; but this is a great Folly for a Man thus to torment himself. It is an Unkindness to my self, and an Injustice to the Providence of God, to impute more Evil to any Dispensation than it really has. A Man should think with himself thus, Either this Loss which I now sustain, is a very great Affliction in it self, or it is not so: If it be a very

very great one, I ought not to add to it the Inconveniences and Miſchiefs of an Exceſſive Sorrow for it; nor do I wiſely, to increaſe the weight of it by Imaginary and Induſtrious Aggravations. If in it ſelf this Loſs has no great Evil in it, it does not deſerve to be attended with a Solemn and Great Grief and Trouble.

Now the better to divert the Mind from ſuch wounding and aggravating Thoughts, a Man muſt diligently apply himſelf to the Duties and Buſineſs which the Providence of God has given him: And it is a happy thing, in ſuch a caſe, to have ſome neceſſary Buſineſs which does require our immediate Care and Application. Thus a Man, having loſt the Partner of his Cares, may prevent or cure the more grievous Load of an Exceſſive Sorrow, by taking now all thoſe Cares upon himſelf; juſt as a Viper does afford an Antidote. Hiſtory affords us many Inſtances of great and wiſe Men, who have taken ſuch a courſe as this to moderate their Sorrows for the Death of thoſe that were Dear to them. *Anaxagoras* was in his School diſcourſing to his Auditors concerning the Cauſes of Natural things; at the ſame time a Meſſenger comes to him, and relates the Death of his Son: He interrupts his Diſcourſe with this Sentence, I knew that I had begotten

a Mortal Child. And having said this, he went on in his Discourse. *Pericles* had lost two Sons, very Delightful young Men, within the space of nine days; he, instead of giving himself up to Lamentations and Grief, puts a Garland upon his Head, Cloaths himself in White, as was the Custom of Orators when they spoke in publick, assembles the People to the usual place, and there recommended to them such Matters as were Important to the Common-wealth, and perswaded them to a necessary War. In like manner the Royal *David*, who was a greater Prince than *Pericles*, and a greater Philosopher than *Anaxagoras*, after his Child, which he had been much concerned for, was dead, then he left his Retirement, went first to the House of God to pay his due Devotions to Heaven, and then admitted his Servants, andapplied himself to his Affairs. At another time, when a great Passion surpriz'd him upon the Death of *Absolom*; though he could not perswade himself to do so, yet he suffered himself to be prevailed upon by the Faithful though rude Address of his Servant; and so was inabled to overcome his Sorrow. Certainly every Man may be easily convinced of this, that he ought not to suffer a Fond Love to a Relation departed, to prevail with him above his Love

to

to God, and his living Relations, and Friends and Neighbours: Therefore he muſt apply himſelf with the more earneſtneſs to the Duties of his Place, that he may, as far as he can, make up the Loſs which they ſuſtain too in the Perſon deceaſed.

Again, to prevent or cure an immoderate Sorrow, a Man muſt give himſelf leave to uſe and enjoy moderately the neceſſary Refreſhments of Nature, and the Pleaſures of Life. Indeed to think of drowning Sorrow by intemperate Pleaſures, or of diverting it by ſuch as are unlawful, is direct Folly and Madneſs. Such a Courſe would only divert it perhaps for a few Moments, ſo as that it might return again with the greater Force and Fury. This were to give himſelf more occaſion for Sadneſs and Melancholy, to cure the Effects of that which at preſent afflicts him: To add the Torments of a guilty Mind to the Afflictions of his outward Condition: To increaſe the Diſpleaſure of the Divine Providence, and provoke Almighty God to increaſe his Puniſhment. What Cure is this? to run out of one Extream into another; and from Sin in our Sorrow, to tranſgreſs in our Delight and Pleaſure: Such an one it is, as that of an Ague when the ſhivering cold Fit is turned into the Feaver of an hot one. But if he takes ſufficient care to keep

himself Innocent, the Sorrowful Person must let himself freely and liberally enjoy the Pleasures and Provisions which God has given him: While he mortifies himself through disdain of the Comforts of Life, he feeds his Sorrow, and lets that increase: He should say to himself, Is it fit for me to be Angry with my self, because I have lost her whom I loved? Was it my fault that she could not live any longer here, when it pleased God to call her away? If it be not my Fault, why should I punish my self for it, by forsaking my necessary Pleasures and Refreshment? The Soul, when it is disordered (says the Philosopher) ought to receive Help from the Vigour of a Healthful Body: For the sharpest Edge of her Grief, is blunted and rebated when the Body is in Tranquility and Ease. But where, from an ill and a mortifying Diet, the Body becomes Hot and Dry, so that it cannot supply the Soul with Commodious and Serene Spirits, but only breaths forth Melancholy Vapours and Exhalations, which perpetually annoy her with Grief and Sadness; there 'tis difficult for a Man, though never so willing and desirous, to recover the Tranquility of his Mind, after it has been disturbed with Evil Affections.

Further, He that would prevent or cure an Immoderate Sorrow, must study for such Con-

Considerations as are proper to alleviate his Case; or must be willing to have such suggested to him by his Friends: As a Man would be willing to find out, or be directed to a Remedy which would prevent or cure a Mortal and Painful Disease of his Body. And when such Considerations are found out or presented to him, he must meditate on them much, and so use and apply the Remedy. Instead of vexing Thoughts at the Intervals of his Business, he must entertain himself with these; Reason was given us to be the Guide and Conductor of our Lives; to keep off Evils, or to mitigate them if we can, or to Comfort and Support us under them, and to prevent the Folly and Extravagancies of our Passions. We must set it then to its Office in this case, and furnish it with fit Weapons to tame and subdue this shameful, uneasie and mischievous Passion.

And because in all our Ways and Undertakings, we ought to acknowledge our Sufficiency to be only from God, and all our good Success to depend upon his Blessing, we must therefore in this endeavour, as well as in all others implore his Assistance, by Earnest and Persevering Prayer. We must beg of him some way to mitigate our Affliction, to remove it by repairing the loss we sustain; or to give us the necessary

Aſſiſtance to bear it patiently. We have an High Prieſt, onr Advocate in Heaven, who is touch'd with a Feeling of our Infirmities, and does compaſſionate our Griefs; who having Suffered himſelf, and having been Tempted, we are told he is ready to Succor thoſe that are Tempted: He, if we addreſs our ſelves in his Name, will afford us his Powerful Patronage; and we cannot fail, for his ſake, to obtain in due time, and when perhaps our Patience is well tried, the Relief and Mercy which we need: And while we wait on God for his Mercy, we muſt not be in haſte to obtain it, but reſign our ſelves to him; and though he does not think fit to relieve us immediately, we muſt ſtill wait on him, and continue our Truſt in him. And this the Royal Pſalmiſt recommends to us by his Practice, and by the Happy Event of it to himſelf, *Pſal.* 40.

'Tis good with Patience to attend,
And on the Lord rely;
When other Succors fail'd, to him
I pray'd, who heard my Cry.

I that in Miſery was plung'd,
Surrounded with Deſpair,
Am ſafely plac'd above my Fears,
And firm my Goings are.

And

And now I'll chearful Praiſes ſing,
To God that ſet me free;
While this thy Goodneſs doth invite
Others to truſt in thee. Patr. Tranſla

Conſiderations proper to moderate our Grief for the Death of thoſe whom we lov'd.

Having thus made Way for them, I come now to propoſe ſuch Conſiderations as may be proper to moderate our Sorrow for the Death of thoſe whom we love. And to make the Arguments which they afford to this Purpoſe, the more ready to be applied to himſelf, I ſhall expreſs them commonly in the firſt Perſon, and ſuppoſe him that reads, arguing with himſelf upon them, as I deſire he ſhould do.

The firſt, That all Men are Mortal.

1. All Men are Mortal: It is the common Doom, Duſt thou art, and unto Duſt ſhalt thou return. It belongs to our very Conſtitution, to be liable to Death: Our Bodies are made up of a changable Maſs; as they Naturally grow, ſo they are by Nature, liable to fade and decay. 'Tis true, our kind Creator did not intend us for the Diſſolution of Death, when he firſt created us, but offer'd us the Favour of Immortality

tality upon an eaſie and juſt Condition. And if our firſt Parents had perform'd that Condition, they ſhould never have ſeen Death, but have been tranſlated without Death, after a Time, to a better State. And all their Poſterity after them, if they alſo would have obſerv'd, that Condition ſhould have been Immortal too. But alas, by one Man, even our firſt Parent, Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin; and Sin ſpreading from him over all the Humane Nature, Death follows it, and triumphs over all likewiſe. The great God then has done us no Injury, in that he has condemn'd us all to die: It is but what we have deſerv'd and pull'd upon our ſelves. We are by Nature Mortal Creatures, or liable to die, and he leaves us in that Mortal State, and has determin'd we ſhall die upon a reaſonable and juſt Provocation: And to do thus, is not to deal either hardly or unjuſtly with us. (*Dean of St.* Paul's, *his Diſcourſe on Death.* Chap. 2. Sect. 1.) nor is it any Diminution of the Kindneſs or Power of the Redeemer's Love, that we are ſtill ſubject to this Condemnation: For as the Caſe is with our preſent Life, it were a Puniſhment to live for ever here, amidſt Groans and Pains, and Griefs and Miſeries: To be always confin'd to this wretched and vile Body. It is a Kindneſs to be tranſlated

translated hence, and for the Soul to be set at Liberty from such a Body which is a Burden and Hindrance to all her Noblest Operations: And she thereby exerts her highest Powers freely, and enjoys more Pleasure by Consequence, than she can do here. And the Kindness of the Redeemer to Good Men, will be abundantly shown when he does, as he has promis'd, raise their Bodies again at the last Day, with all the glorious Advantages which his own Glorified Body is now invested with. 'Tis true, the Good Man might, if it pleased God, be translated to Heaven without dying, as *Enoch* and *Elijah* were; and as they shall be who shall be found alive at the the last Day upon the Earth, suffering only such a sudden, and perhaps an easie Change as shall fit their Bodies for the Heavenly State. But if it were so, this would not be much Ease to our Grief, because still their Departure might trouble us, and our Loss of their Company and Assistance. And if it pleases God still, that the common Way of our leaving this World, be by our Dissolution, we have nothing that we may say against it. But this we must yield in general, that it must be wise and just, because he appoints it. And we may acquiesce in such a Reason for it as this, That the Wisdom and Justice of God thinks fit to leave a standing

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Ignominy upon the Humane Nature, to be, to all Ages, a Token of his Diſpleaſure againſt the Wickedneſs of the World; and to awe and affright Men from Sin, by that which is moſt terrible to Senſe and Nature. And this is fit to have ſuch an Effect, though to avoid Sin, will not exempt us from Death, becauſe he has aſſured us, that if we forſake our Sins and live well, we ſhall be recovered from Death to an Immortal Life and Happineſs, even that which we were originally deſigned for.

Let this then be conſidered and improved as far as it may be, to comfort us in the Death of thoſe who are excellent and good Perſons, and who are dear to us, That 'tis appointed for all Men once to die, and there is none that lives who ſhall not ſee Death: All ſorts of Men are Mortal, and ſubject to it, the High and Low, the Rich and the Poor? and the Poor Man is as loth to leave his Cottage, as the Prince to leave his Stately Pallaces. In every Age and Condition of Life, we are all liable to Death, and many die of every Age, as well in full Strength ſome, when the Breaſts are full of Milk, and the Bones with Marrow, as others under the Decays of Life, and when Age has withered and dried them. Neither can Wiſdom or Sacred Piety exempt any from this common Ne-

Neceſſity, as the Royal Pſalmiſt reminds us, *Pſal.* 49.

Vain Men applaud their Stores, yet none,
His Brother can from dying ſave;
Lifes Purchaſe is too great, no Wealth
Can buy our Freedom from the Grave.

The Aſhes of the Wiſe, and Good,
With Fools together mingled lie;
The Rich, tho' loth to go, muſt leave
This World with all their Wealth, and die. Ib.

But ſince this is ſo, 'tis utterly vain and abſurd, that I ſhould perplex my ſelf, becauſe Death is happen'd to a mortal Creature: Should I trouble my ſelf becauſe a Spark flies upward, or a Stone falls downward, or that Fire burns. Events will come to paſs, without a Miracle, according to the Nature of Things; and all my Concern will not prevent it. However, ſince my loved Friend is Dead, my greateſt Sorrow cannot now prevent her Death, nor recover her: And is it fit that I ſhould torment my ſelf with a Fatal Neceſſity? Or is it good Manners in me to Quarrel with a Divine Appointment? Can I be ſo fooliſh as to wiſh, that the Wiſe Governour of the World would alter the Courſe of things, and revoke the preſent Laws of Nature to gratifie me.

It

It may be conſider'd, We are all of us not only liable to Death, but actually Dying while we Live here. Our tranſitory Life does every moment waſt and ſpend it ſelf, and is continually going away from us. At every Night has Death ſeized one day more of our Lives: And when we ſay, ſo many years we have liv'd, we might ſay ſo many years are Dead with us, ſo many are paſt and gone for ever. Why ſhould it then be an occaſion of immoderate Sorrow, that my Friend is now Dead, when I troubled my ſelf but little, for that ſhe was always dying? I ſhould rather have reſented this matter every day a little, than now lament it all at once: From that I might have deriv'd ſome advantage to bear her Departure, and I had been hardned to endure what is now befallen me; but now to afflict my ſelf for it, is vain and fruitleſs.

I cannot expect that my Friends ſhould be Immortal in this dying Life: The World is not to be always poſſeſt by the ſame Inhabitants. One Generation goes, and another comes, (*Eccleſ.* 1. 4.) A great many Thouſands are gone off this mortal Stage before we come upon it: And all that now live here muſt go away too, and leave their Places to others who ſhall ſucceed them: And they too in a little time ſhall leave them to Others.

We

We bear Resemblance to the Autumn Leaves,
Which of their Verdure ev'ry Blast bereaves:
The little Beauties are discolour'd found,
And the Wind scatters them upon the Ground.
But in the Spring, a new Succession's made,
Which in the Woods do cast a Gloomy Shade.
So one Part of Mankind does always die,
Another comes, that Frailty to supply.
Homer in Plut. Cons.

Since to die is the common Lot, my Friend has not herein a worse Fate than others of Mankind. She is but gone before, we must all follow her in the same Track. I have not a harder Fortune than others, in that my Relations are Mortal, for all Mens are so: And if I am depriv'd of so dear a Relation to Day, some others were depriv'd of one as dear Yesterday, and others must suffer such a Loss to Morrow. The Poet makes a Brave Woman harden and fortifie her self with this Consideration.

My Sons by Death are ravisht from my Side,
And I a Widdow am, who was a Bride:
I am not thus selected to be croſt,
Others their Sons and Husbands too have lost.
Eurip. in Plut. Cons.

If all Men are Mortal, then my Enemies are so as well as my Friends. And as the Comfort and Usefulness of the one to me, is of uncertain Duration, and must needs

come to an end, ſo the Perſecution of the others is in the ſame State: If my Dear Friend was ſnatch'd away full of kind Thoughts and Purpoſes towards Me, my Enemies may be taken too in the midſt of their Malicious Projects againſt me.

If all Men are Mortal, then am I ſo too; I muſt expect to be called away e'er long from this World: I ſhall not always, then, ſtand in need of the Kindneſs of my Friends here, nor be expoſed to the Malice of Enemies; the Time grows every day leſs and leſs that I have to ſtay behind after my Departed Friend: It is very fit then, that my Sorrow for her Departure ſhould grow leſs and leſs too, becauſe by this means the time approaches of our Happy Meeting again: I ſhould be very Fooliſh, if I ſhould greatly trouble my ſelf for what happens to me in a Place where I am not likely to make any long abode. The little time I have to live, tells me I cannot ſpare much to ſpend in Grief for the Death of another; I have my own Death to prepare for, which I muſt do in a far better way of ſpending my time, than in a Sullen Diſcontent and Grief. The Follies and Sins attending my Immoderate Sorrow for the Death of my Friend, would render me unfit to meet my own Death with Comfort. I muſt take care to Live

well,

well, if I would Die comfortably; and muſt diligently ſpend my Life in ſuch Duties as the Providence of God has given me here to perform.

The Providence of God chuſes the time of every Perſons Death.

2. It may be conſidered and improved to the moderating of our Grief for the Death of thoſe we Love, That it is the Providence of God which chuſes the time of every Perſons Death: There is not any thing that comes to paſs in this World, without the Operation or Permiſſion of Divine Providence: Not a Sparrow falls to the Ground without it: Our Saviour tells us (*Matt.* 10. 29.) It is the Juſt Prerogative of the Creator, to kill and to make alive as he pleaſes. He who when he pleaſed gave my Dear Relation Birth, and brought her into the World, when he ſaw fit removed her from hence again: It was he that gave her to me at my Deſire, who has now taken her away again; and what have I to do, but, with that good Man, to ſay, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* There was a large time that I had her not, then I did not mourn for the want of her, why ſhould I do it now? Is it worſe with me now than it was then? If I ſay ſo, I muſt ſay it had

 been

been better I had never had her; and then I accuse the Providence of God, as doing me a Diskindness in that which I once thought a mighty Favour: And at this rate it would be hard even for God himself to please my various Mind. If I do not accustom my self to submit and be contented with every thing that he allots me, it will be a great Hazard that I shall not be contented with any thing.

If it pleases God to take away from me any Comfort of this Life, which he sometime lent, I have no right to blame nor be angry with him for this; he does herein what he will but with that which is his own; my Enjoyments are more his than mine, even while I have them; they are but lent to me, and I am a very Ungrateful and Rude Creditor if I quarrel with him who comes to demand his Loan: I was bound to be thankful to him while I enjoy'd the Comfort and Benefit of it, this I can easily grant: But then I must yield that I am still bound to be Thankful for it; for though I have not that Benefit now, yet I had it, and thereby I remain Eternally obliged: I ought to be thankful for that he lent me his Gift so long, and did not recall it sooner. If I Murmur and Repine at God's Disposal of his own, I oppose my Will to his; and would have the Government of the World

out of his Hands, at leaſt ſo far as concerns me and my Friends: Which doubtleſs is a very Fooliſh Wiſh, as it is a Vain one; and would be but Unhappy to me if I could obtain it. Even the Light of Nature ſuggeſted, that 'tis but Juſt we ſhould patiently ſubmit in all things to the Will of God. The *Pythagoreans* ſpeak handſomly to this purpoſe, ſays *Plutarch:*

Bear patiently what Ills by Heav'n are ſent,
And add not to your Griefs by Diſcontent.

And he quotes the Tragedian *Æſchylus*, ſaying,

He ſtore of Wiſdom and of Vertue hath,
Whom nothing from the Gods provoke to Wrath.

Who can poſſibly be ſo fit to diſpoſe of all things, as he who is infinitely Wiſe, and Juſt, and Good? Though the Great God is univerſal Sovereign of the World, yet he does not diſpoſe of things by an abſolute naked Sovereignty; but as he is Good, and Wiſe, and Righteous too, ſo he exerciſes his Sovereignty according to the Direction, as we may ſay, of theſe Attributes: There are no ſuch Abſolute Diſpenſations then, and by Conſequence no ſuch Abſolute Decrees neither, as do not include in them

the Exercises of these Attributes. And this the Inspired Psalmist teaches us, *Psal.* 67.

The Nations now may sing
Their Joys, since God does Reign;
He Rules with Wisdom, this Great Judge
Will Righteousness maintain. Patr. Trans.

And again in *Psal.* 89. he says,

The World, with all therein, Great Lord, is thine,
All made from nothing by thy powerful Voice;
The fullness of the well-replenish'd Earth
Is thine, and all things in thy Care rejoyce.

Thy mighty Pow'r, without controle, Effects
Thy Will, and does not a Resistance fear;
Yet Tender Mercy, Exact Righteousness,
And Stedfast Truth, in all thy Rule appear.

It were not for our Interest to be at our own Disposal: For though perhaps we should be for the most part kind enough to our selves, yet our Ignorance and want of Wisdom would often make us hurt our selves. God's Wisdom knows what is best for us, and his Goodness will always chuse that for a good Man; and his Righteousness is such, that he will certainly never do us any Wrong.

He takes away a Good Man at such a Time as is best for him: And oftentimes that

that he may not ſee the Troubles and Calamities which may befall his Country or his Family. So he call'd away the good *Joſiah* at Thirty Nine Years of Age, and from all the Honour and Felicity of a Throne: And the good Son of wicked *Jeroboam*, while he was but yet a Child. It is well for good Perſons, that their Time of Life is in the Hands of God, and at his Diſpoſal alone; if it were in the Hands of their Friends, they would detain them here too long, amidſt the Dangers, Fears and Conflicts of this World: And if it were at the Diſpoſal of their Enemies, they would hurry them from hence too ſoon from the good Service they do; and that themſelves might be at the more Liberty to do Miſchief: If I am glad my own Time is in God's Hand, I may be contented that my dear Friend's Time was ſo too. He does not take away a good Man before he is fit to die; for as ſuch, he is always ſo: And then his Death does never come too ſoon for his Advantage, let it come when it will.

It is a Kindneſs to be removed from this troubleſome World when we are prepar'd for a better; and the ſooner we obtain our Diſmiſſion, it ſeems to be the better for us. The choſen Veſſel, to whom to live was Chriſt, and who certainly liv'd to good Purpoſe, yet thought it better for himſelf

to depart and be with Chriſt, than to ſtay here; and he deſir'd it as a thing that would be gainful to him. We very often ſee, that thoſe who arrive to an extraordinary Degree and Ripeneſs of Piety and Virtue in early Years, are alſo early diſmiſt from this World; which doubtleſs, is not out of Diſpleaſure, but out of Favour to them. The Moraliſt ſays, Vertuous Men die in the Prime of their Years, by the Kindneſs of the Gods to whom they are peculiarly dear. And he quotes *Menander*, ſaying to this Purpoſe:

Whom God does take care for, and love,
They die young here to live above.

The Caſe of my departed pious Friend then, is this: I lov'd her, and ſhe was moſt pleaſing to me by her excellent Accompliſhments, and for theſe Reaſons I would fain have detained her here: And God loved her too, and ſhe was pleaſing to him, and he has taken her to himſelf; and what have I to ſay to this. If any thing, ſure I ſhould fall down on my Knees, and thank him on her Behalf. I have now ſomewhat the more Engagement and Reaſon to joyn with that Thankſgiving of the Church: We bleſs thy Holy Name (O Lord) for all thy Servants

vants departed this Life in thy Faith and Fear.

If my Friend dies in the Prime of her Years (as your dear Companion did) ſhe then eſcapes the heavy Infirmities of Old Age, which to the moſt of Men comes attended with many, and thoſe very grievous Inconveniences. Of which one ſpeaks thus:

Long Life oppreſt with many Woes,
Meets more, the further ſtill it goes.

And another deſcribes that Unhappy Age of Life thus.

The Evils of frail Life oppreſs the Old;
Looſe wither'd Skin does their ſhrunk Limbs enfold:
Their Senſes fail, their Joynts grow ſtiff; and through
Their Veins not Blood, but Watry Humours flow.
Their trembling Bodies with a Staff they ſtay,
Nor do they breath, but ſigh the Time away:
While Anxious Thoughts afflict the weary Mind,
Through want of Sleep no Eaſe from them they find.

One very fitly compares an Early Death to a Man's going away from an Entertainment before he becomes abſurd, and before the feeble Staggerings and Dotage of Drunkenneſs overtake him. And the unmannerly Contempt of Old Age, which but too frequently it meets with from the

Ignorance and Folly, and the Pride of Youth, is commonly more uneasie and vexatious than all its own Infirmities. But from all these things, my departed Friend is deliver'd and secur'd for ever.

It is not at all the worse for her, that she had not a long Life, meerly upon that Account: That Life is not the best which is longest only. And when we go to God, it will not be enquired, how long we have liv'd, but how well. And the short Life of one Person, may obtain from him much more Applause, and much greater Rewards than the longer Life of another. If my departed Friend was very industrious in the Duties of her Place, she might live much in a little Time. If she had form'd great Projects and Designs for the Glory of God, and the Benefit of Mankind: God who inspir'd her with them, accepts the Will for the Deed, since he does not allow her Time to put them in Execution: And is now rewarding her for her good Designs.

We should consider the Circumstances of the Death we lament, which may alleviate our Sorrow.

3. We should carefully observe what Circumstances may be found in the Death which we lament, that may be proper to alleviate our Sorrow for it. For 'tis very true, what the Phi-

Philoſopher ſays, that every thing has two Handles, the one tolerable, and the other intolerable. (*Epict. Cap.* 65.) It is our Wiſdom then, to take every thing which happens to us, by that which is tolerable; for then it will do us leaſt Harm, and be leaſt grievous to us. Some Circumſtances may aggravate, ſome may alleviate the ſame thing. And perhaps from the very ſame Circumſtances, Paſſion may draw Vexation; from which, pure Reaſon and a compoſed Mind would derive Alleviations of the Evil. We have all of us but too frequent Reaſon, through Neglect of this Wiſdom, to apply to our ſelves what a Devout Perſon, much to this Purpoſe ſings.

Unhappy we, by our own Fault,
'Tis we our Life abuſe:
The World preſents a furniſht Shop,
But we the Tools miſuſe.

So have I ſeen a fooliſh Child,
If Nurſe but turn her Eye;
Inſtead of Haft, take hold o'th' Blade,
And cut it ſelf, and cry.

That fooliſh Child, alas, am I;
Self-will'd, ſelf-wounded too:
But Lord, turn not thy Face away,
Leſt I my ſelf undo. Reform'd Devot. Hymn 29

I ought then to seek and enquire if there may not be found such Circumstances in the Death of my dear Friend, as may alleviate and soften the Affliction.

And it is considerable, to this Purpose, that she did not die by the Hands of Cruel Men: I did not see her chain'd to a Stake and burnt alive; nor torn in pieces by Wild Beasts; nor broil'd on a Gridiron, nor frozen to Death in Water, nor nail'd to a Cross: She did not die by slow Tortures, a long lingring Death: As many pious Souls, highly belov'd of Heaven, and of whom this World was not worthy, have done. She was not, in her Death, made a Spectacle to the World; not expos'd to the Scorn, nor sacrificed to the Malice of her Enemies: But died by the gentle Hand of God, a kind Father, in her Bed; and is laid to Rest in her Grave, among the Sepulchers of her Ancestours. She was not snatch'd away from me all at once, by an Apoplexy, or any such sudden Death. I had the Warning of some Days to prepare, as well as I could, for the worst Event; And she had so much Warning to compleat her Fitness to die, or to put her self into an actual Dispositedness for it. And as her Death was not so sudden as to be altogether a Surprize, so neither was her Sickness long and tedious. I remember with

with what an Admirable Patience, and Conſtancy of Mind, ſhe bore the worſt Inconveniences of it.

It may be a great ſatisfaction to me to conſider, That the Providence of God order'd this to befall her when I could be preſent, and perform the laſt Offices of my Love. That it did not happen at ſuch a time when I might have been call'd away, and at a great diſtance from her: So ſhe had the Comfort of my Love to the laſt moments of her Life. And doubtleſs it pleaſed, and comforted her much, and allay'd her Affliction, to ſee that ſhe enjoy'd in her diſtreſs, the diligent and careful Attendance of ſo dear a Friend. And if this ſoftned her Affliction, it may juſtly leſſen my Sorrow for what ſhe endur'd. I may be ſatisfied too in this, That I ſought and procur'd for her the beſt means and helps to recover, that Art or Nature could afford: That nothing was wanting in Care or Endeavour on any part, to have retain'd her amongſt us. It was evidently God's bleſſed Will to take her hence: And his Will be done.

As ſhe was Virtuous and Pious, ſhe was in the ſame meaſure willing to Die; and able to receive her Death with an undaunted Courage and Reſolution. Virtue is an Eſſay, a kind of Preludium of Dying: as it mortifies our Affections to this vain World,

World, and fixes them on better Objects, the Gifts and Felicities of Heaven. To one that has wean'd her Heart from this Life, and is in the Temper and Disposition of her Mind Dead to this World, it is no very uncouth, no very grievous thing to Die. My Friend was practising Death by Degrees while she liv'd; and mortified first one Affection, then another. That she must now leave all her Enjoyments, did not much grieve her, because she had been gradually leaving them before; she had been separating her Heart from them. To make the burden of Dying the more easie to bear, she took it up by Parcels; and so having deliver'd her self from them, she did not bear it all at once. Thus it came to pass, that she was no sooner sensible she must Die, than willing to do so. She was ready to resign up her good Soul into the Hands of a Faithful Creator: And she, whose Death I am tempted inordinately to Lament, did not at all Lament for it her self. Her willing Submission and Resignation to the Divine Disposal, should teach me the same thing. She went away, perhaps, not only contented, but joyful that she was to go. Tho her Love to me, and her Wisdom, might make her Conceal that she was willing to leave me; yet she was glad, I may believe, to find that she had finish'd her Course, that

she

ſhe was) come to the End of a dangerous Warfare, of a weary Race: That ſhe was now going to receive her Maſters kind Applauſe. She was glad that ſhe was going to the dear Embraces of her Celeſtial Lover; to the charming Preſence of Jeſus the Prince of Loves. She had, it may be, ſuch foretaſts of the Heavenly Bliſs, as even raviſht her Soul away: She long'd to partake of more of that which was here ſo pleaſant, and flew to it upon the ſtrong Wings of ardent Deſire: And if it was thus with her, as it might be, though her Diſtemper made her not able to expreſs it; then 'tis very incongruous, that I ſhould attend her Triumph and Joy with my immoderate Sorrow and Tears.

It may be conſider'd too as an Allay of her Departure, that ſhe had not thoſe Hoſtages to leave to the unkind World, which tender Mothers are often ſo loth to part with. And as it may comfort me to conſider, that her Death wanted this unhappy Circumſtance to make it the more uneaſie to her ſelf; ſo I am hereby deliver'd from an Aggravation of her Departure, which would have made it the more uneaſie to me. If I muſt have been concern'd on their account, and have been troubled with a ſenſe of the loſs they had ſuſtain'd; and if ſo much the more Care muſt have been the Burden of all my

my Shoulders alone upon her leaving me; which muſt have been if ſhe had left me any ſuch Objects of my Care.

It ſhould be conſider'd, what good things we ſtill enjoy.

4. In all Afflictions and Loſſes, we may moderate our Sorrow by conſidering what good things are ſtill left us. The Philoſopher thought, that the calling to mind, and the letting our Thoughts ſtay upon the comfortable and happy Circumſtances which are paſt and gone, might be of uſe to Alleviate Sorrow; therefore he ſays, He who calls proſperous things to Mind, and turning his Thoughts from dark, and melancholy Objects, fixes them on bright and chearful ones. He will either quite extinguiſh his Grief, or by allaying it with a ſenſe of contrary things, render it weak and Feeble: For as a Perfume (ſays he) brings Delight to the Noſtrils, and alſo fortifies them againſt ill ſmells; ſo the remembrance of Happineſs gives neceſſary aſſiſtance in Adverſity to thoſe who will uſe it. Have I not taken ſatisfaction heretofore, to reflect upon the obliging and charming Converſation of my Friend, when my Affairs have kept me abſent from her? And have not ſuch Reflections ſweetned and allay'd that Abſence? Why then ſhould not ſuch Reflections do me the ſame Kindneſs ſtill?

ſtill? If I let this Impertinent Thought afflict me, that I muſt no more enjoy the ſame Delight, it will deprive me too of all the Uſe, and Comfort, and Pleaſure, of what I have enjoy'd; which would make my Condition ſtill much the worſe.

But if it be uſeful to alleviate our Sorrow, to remember the good things which we had, and reflect upon the Delight which they afforded us; it muſt be certainly much more uſeful to look upon thoſe good things that remain with us, and entertain our Thoughts with the Advantages and Accommodations of them. As there is no Condition of Life that is perfectly Happy, and furniſhed with all Good, and exempted from all manner of Evil; ſo there is not one ſo perfectly Miſerable and Grievous, but ſomewhat that is Convenient and Comfortable may be obſerved in it: And it is our Wiſdom to take notice of whatever is Commodious and Comfortable.

Some Good things, with the Evil, ſtill are join'd,
And in ſtrict Union mutually combin'd;
The Checker'd Work does Beautiful appear,
And what is Sweet, allays the more Severe.

Eurip. in Plut. de Tranq.

We ought not to be diſcouraged, nor deſpond in our Afflictions, but imitate the

Musicians, as one says, who drown the harsh Cadencies with others which more Caress the Ear: We by tempering our Adverse Fortune with what is more Prosperous, should render our Lives as equal and as Pleasant as we can. Whatever our Condition of Life is, this Weapon against Grief is necessary to us; unless there were any State of Life on Earth which were perfectly Happy. In the greatest Affluence of Worldly Goods we shall want something, and shall be apt to think we want more than we do: But if we will not take notice of what we have, and will let our selves be always pining after what we want or desire, we shall be continually tormented with Grief and Discontent.

I will consider then, that through the Favour of God, I have many things very Comfortable still left me, to allay the Loss of this one; I have lost one Friend, and indeed the neareſt and Deareſt I had, but I have still a great many more, who will all readily do their utmost to render this Loss as easie and tolerable as they can: And there are Thousands of Good People pity me, and daily recommend me in their Fervent Prayers to the Father of Mercies. I have some Diligent and Faithful Servants to assist me in my Affairs; and I have a good Esteem and Reputation in the World.

I

I have ſtill, Thanks be to God, that Plentiful or Competent Fortune which he has provided to Comfort my Paſſage through this World: If I Lament that ſhe I loved is taken away from Plenteous and Happy Circumſtances which we enjoy'd together, I ought to allay my Grief, by conſidering that the ſame Happy Circumſtances are continued to me, though ſhe be removed. And, as the Philoſopher wiſely ſpeaks, it is not to be eſteemed a great Evil to want theſe things, and but a ſmall Benefit to enjoy them: If then ſhe has a great Loſs and Unhappineſs in being taken away from our Proſperous Circumſtances, I have a great Favour and Benefit afforded me that I am ſtill left to enjoy them.

Others, I may believe, account me very Happy in the Circumſtances which I have, who want a great deal of that which I ſhall enjoy: And if they account me Happy, why ſhould I judge my ſelf Miſerable? They may perhaps pretend to be very Sorry for my Misfortune, and come to Condole it: But this is meer Pretence, They ſtill account my Condition better than their own. *Ariſtippus* was ſenſible of this, who when he had loſt a noble Farm, and one came with great Profeſſions of Sorrow for his Loſs, he asked of that Perſon, whether he had more than one Field? He granted

that he had not: And have not I (says he) three still left me? This was granted too: Have not I then (replied *Aristippus*) more reason to condole your Misfortune, than you mine. It is excellent Advice which the Philosopher (*Plut.*) gives his Wife to this purpose, upon the Death of their Beloved Daughter, Do not you (said he) take notice of the Tears and Moans of such as visit you, condoling your Misfortunes, for their Tears and Sighs are things of course. But rather do you consider, how Happy every one of them esteems you for the Circumstances which you are still in, notwithstanding your Loss. For it would be an ill thing, if, while others covet your Fortune, though sullied with this Affliction, you should your self despise what you enjoy; and through too much Sense of your Affliction, should forget that Gratefulness which you owe for the Happiness which remains untouch'd. He certainly did well, to mention the Gratitude we owe for what we still enjoy; for it is doubtless an Ingratitude to the Supreme Disposer of all things, and so a Sin against God, to let the Sense of any Loss deprive us of all Sense and Comfort in what remains with us: And this must, then, be a great Provocation to Almighty God, to take away even what is left us too. I must take care therefore that I do not make my self unwor-

unworthy of what I have, by my Grief for the Enjoyment I have loſt; and that I do not put my ſelf in danger of more Affliction, by an undue Behaviour under what I ſuffer already. Since my Sorrow ariſes from my preſent Loſs, I ought, in Wiſdom, to take care that it may not expoſe me to greater Loſſes. Do I not grieve, becauſe I would not (if it might pleaſe God) loſe thoſe good things which are the Comforts and Supports of my Life; and ſhall I, then, ſo grieve for the loſs of one, as to occaſion and procure the loſs of more?

If I refuſe to take any Comfort in what I ſtill enjoy, I do more towards my own Miſery and Vexation, than the Providence of God has done: And in that caſe, whom have I moſt reaſon and cauſe to be angry with? Shall we imitate, ſays one, the Sordid Miſer, who having heaped together a great deal of Riches, never enjoys what he has in Poſſeſſion; but yet will ſadly Bewail if he chances to loſe it? I ought to be as Juſt to what I have, as to what I have loſt: Is it not becauſe I valued, and took great Delight in that, while I had it, that 'tis now a matter of Grief to me to loſe it? And why then ſhould I not value and take delight in what I ſtill enjoy? Should I grieve for theſe things too if they were taken away? And ſhall I then condemn my ſelf to the

Abſurdity and Miſery of valuing and loving things only when they are gone, and not at all while they are with me?

If all things elſe were taken from me (you may ſay) yet it were a Comfort worth taking notice of, that I have ſtill my ſelf left. If one ſhould ask me, whether I ever had any thing which I could account more valuable and precious than my ſelf? I ſhould be likely to ſay Not. If then I have command of my ſelf, I poſſeſs that ſtill which I would not loſe, and which Fortune cannot take from me. Thus a great Man in his Affliction ſpoke to himſelf (*Boet. l. 2. de Conſol. Philoſ.*) Is it for my own ſake, a Man may ſay, that I am troubled at this Loſs? Then I value my ſelf more than the thing I have loſt: And then I ought to be comforted in this that I ſtill poſſeſs my ſelf. Our Bleſſed Saviour ſuggeſts this Argument, when he ſays, *The Life is more than Meat, and the Body than Raiment.* I may conſider, then, that I have (thanks be to God) a good Enjoyment of my ſelf in the Healthful State of my Body: I have, or may have, a good Enjoyment of my own Mind, and the Accompliſhments and Ornaments of that, if I do not let immoderate Paſſions deprive me of theſe: I have ſtill that Courage and Reſolution to Undertake, that Induſtry and Skill to Manage and Conduct, and that Conſtancy

ſtancy and Steadineſs of Mind to proſecute any Deſigns of Importance, which through the Favour of God have heretofore ſo well ſucceeded to me. A Man may retain his Virtue ſtill, and enjoy the Happy Conſolations and Applauſes of a Good Conſcience under all his outward Loſſes: He may ſay, I have not in this Loſs parted with my Hopes of Heaven, and of the Enjoyment of Eternal good things there: Thus I poſſeſs ſtill, through the Favour of God, thoſe things, which in the beſt of my days, were the beſt things I had: And it is the peculiar happy Advantage of theſe things, that they ſhall never be loſt, nor can be taken from me, unleſs I will.

God is always the Good Man's Friend.

5. It is very fit to allay even the greateſt Affliction, to conſider, That God is always the Good Man's Friend. A peculiar Favour he always has for ſuch: They pleaſe him in their Actions, and they bear his Image and Reſemblance: And his Favour to them is every where aſſur'd in his Revelations of himſelf. *The Lord ordereth a Good Man's Goings*, we are told, *and maketh his Way acceptable to himſelf. They that are of a froward or perverſe Heart, are an Abomination to the Lord, but ſuch as are upright in their*

Way, are his Delight. And the Wiſe Man ſays, *He loveth him that followeth after Righteouſneſs: The Lord is far from the Wicked, but he heareth the Prayer of the Righteous.* We find this Truth very often and very joyfully celebrated by a good Man, and own'd to have been his frequent Experience; and he too, was a Perſon that was exerciſed with very many Afflictions; I mean the greateſt King, and the ſweet Singer of *Iſrael*; who ſays (in *Pſal.* 34. for Inſtance.)

God loves the Righteous, and on them
He caſts a Gracious Eye:
His Ear's attentive to their Suits,
And open to their Cry.

Nor do they cry in vain: wiſh'd Help
And Eaſe their Troubles have:
God will draw near to broken Hearts,
And contrite Spirits ſave.

Tho' Good Men oft afflicted are,
At length God ſets them free:
His Care does to their Bodies reach,
No Bone ſhall broken be.

Bad Men ſhall periſh when they're plagu'd,
With all that hate the Juſt;
Whom God will keep, and never fail,
Their Hopes that on him Truſt. Patr. Tranſ.

And

And in the ſame Pſalm, he declares theſe great things to have been his own happy Experience: And ſays,

I ſought the Lord in my Diſtreſs,
And graciouſly he heard:
His Timely Succours did prevent
The threatning Harm I fear'd.

Bleſt Angels, which on God attend,
Yet, wait t' encompaſs ſuch
As fear him, to preſerve them ſafe,
When Dangers near approach.

O Taſte and ſee, as I have done;
And then confeſs you muſt,
That God is good, and they are bleſt,
That in his Goodneſs truſt. Ib.

But if God be the Good Man's Friend, every Man may ſay, then, he may be mine: It is but my becoming a Good Man, and I ſhall certainly have him ſo: And what Joys, what mighty Conſolations will this afford, to have God my Friend! To be a Favourite of the King of Heaven! Of an infinite Being! Of the Fountain of Good! Of the Supream Governour and Diſpoſer of all things! Of the Eternal, the Unchangable God! His Favour and Friendſhip is a ſure, and a moſt uſeful Poſſeſſion, and will do more for me, than any other thing can do.

It is the greateſt and happieſt Advantage that a poor, weak, mortal Creature can attain. And this too, the Royal Pſalmiſt ſweetly ſings, (*Pſal.* 4.)

Tho' others in Diſtruſt of thee,
To other Succours fly,
Thou art my Hope; Lord caſt on me
A Favourable Eye.

Thy Love more chears my Heart, than when
Their Corn has wiſh'd Increaſe;
Or when a happy Vintage makes
Their Wine o'erflow the Preſs.

Down will I lie in Peace, and Sleep
Shall cloſe my wearied Eyes;
No Fears diſturb me whilſt I know
In God my Safety lies. Patr. Tranſl.

If the great and good God, then, be my Friend, I ſhall not, if he pleaſes, ſee any ill Conſequences of my preſent Loſs: The greateſt Affliction of it ſhall be the Loſs it ſelf; and it may be perhaps, intended and ſent as a Ballaſt, to keep my Mind ſteady, and in good Order, in ſome great Felicity that he intends me; thoſe proſperous Gales might overſet my Wiſdom and Virtue without it, and the Conſequence of that might be the ſpeedy ruine of my Proſperity too. If it pleaſes God, he will make up this Loſs

to

to me, in ſuch ways as his Wiſdom ſees fitteſt for me. Have I loſt a Friend that was very Wiſe, and capable to afford good Counſel in matters of Difficulty? I have in him a Friend of infinite Wiſdom. Was my departed Friend very kind, very tender of my Comfort, and concern'd for my Intereſts? There is no Lover like the God of Love, or ſo kind as he, who is *abundant in Goodneſs*. I am indeed well-aſſur'd that my departed Friend was faithful, and would have been always true: And can any one be more faithful and true, than the God of Truth. And to all this I may add, for my Comfort, the conſideration of his Almighty Power. In many things ſhe found her ſelf able to do no more for me, than to wiſh my Advantage; but the Almighty God can do what he pleaſes: She might in many Caſes want Power, or Opportunity to do me kindneſs, but theſe the ſupream diſpoſer of all things can never want. He certainly can ſupply the abſence of any Creature, and eaſily find out ways to make this Want and Loſs unſenſible to me: That which I think an intolerable Affliction, he will, if he ſees good, render a very light one, or ſo deal with me as to make me account it none at all.

But if this ſhall prove an Affliction to me, and draw more in conſequence along with it,

it, this muſt not diſcourage nor deject me; for I may notwithſtanding this, be an Object of the Divine Favour. The wiſe Man ſays, *The Righteous, and the Wiſe, and their Works, are in the Hand of God: No Man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.* Which another Wiſe Man explains in an excellent Paraphraſe thus: "Though good Men, and prudent, are under the Care of God (which muſt ſatisfie "them in all Events) by whoſe ſpecial Providence, both they and their Undertakings and Affairs, are approv'd, directed, govern'd, and defended; yet "(ſuch a Secret there is in it) they prove "ſometimes ſo unſucceſsful, that no Man "can know, by any thing that befals them, "or others, how God ſtands affected towards them; but will conclude very falſly, "if he judge that God loves him, who "hath all that his Heart deſires; or that he "hates him who is ſorely afflicted, (*Bp. of* Ely, *Paraph. in loc*) The wiſe God ſees it uſeful and neceſſary, ſometimes to rebuke and chaſten thoſe whom he loves (*Rev.*3.19.) Indulgence and Liberality (as one ſays) may be extended to Strangers, and even to Enemies, but the Kindneſs of Chaſtiſement, and Correction, is the peculiar Favour for Friends, Children, and Domeſticks. Afflictions are the neceſſary means to make

ſome

ſome Men good, and to confirm and ſettle them in Virtue: They are uſeful to improve us in Virtue: They ſerve to make us humble, diligent, careful; to teach us Self-denial, and Temperance, and give us a good Command of our ſelves, and our reluctıng Appetites: They are uſeful to teach us Charity and Mercy, and give us tender Compaſſion to the Miſeries and Calamities of others. They are uſeful to cure our extream and fond Affection to the vain Goods of this World: And then to diſpoſe us to value and ſeek the far better things which our Religion propoſes to our Hopes, and which our kind Saviour has, at his own great Loſs, and by great Sufferings, purchaſed for us. The Holy Spirit does often form, or improve in us, the Virtues and Graces which we want, or which moſt need Improvement, by the Afflictions which the Providence of God allots us. The Great and Holy *David* acknowledges he had receiv'd this happy Benefit, by thoſe which he had endur'd. He ſays (in *Pſal.* 16.)

I'll bleſs the Lord, even when he makes
Troubles mine Exerciſe:
Thoſe ſad and ſolitary Thoughts
Inſtruct, and make me wiſe. Patr. Tranſl.

And

And again, to the ſame Purpoſe, he ſays (*Pſal.* 119.)

Whilſt I was proſperous from thy Righteous Path,
Too much I muſt confeſs, I turn'd aſide:
But by thy gentle Chaſtiſements reduc'd,
I made thy Precepts my continual Guide.

It is ſaid indeed, that *all things ſhall work together for good to them that love God*: There ſhall be a Concurrent Operation towards this, in all things that befal them; and their Afflictions among other things, ſhall have a good Effect. And if they promote our Piety and Virtue, if they are ſerviceable to mortifie and correct our Paſſions and Vices, the Benefits which they confer, are moſt happy and eternal ones. But then it muſt be obſerv'd, that theſe Benefits are wrought by them only, upon thoſe who bear their Afflictions well; who continue in the Love of God, while they are afflicted; and do not ſuffer themſelves, either to be angry with God or Men, or dejected at what they ſuffer.

If God be my Friend, he will duly proportion my Sufferings and my Strength; he will certainly lay upon me no more than he will inable me to bear: If I ſet my ſelf, and endeavour to bear, with Meekneſs and Patience, whatever is laid upon me: If I calmly,

calmly, and yet couragiouſly, take up my Croſs when my outward Afflictions abound, my Conſoiations and Aſſiſtance ſhall much more abound: He will help me to bear, as I ought, whatever comes to paſs; if I deſire and endeavour to do ſo: I ſhall, to my Comfort, find, that although I am afflicted, I am not forſaken by his Love and Care: According to what the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Pſal.* 94.

Tho' Good Men for a while chaſtis'd.
May under Troubles groan:
God will not utterly forſake,
Nor caſt away his own. Patr. Tranſ.

His Mercy, I may hope, will keep me ſafe, under all my Sufferings, from the Evil of Sin, which is the greateſt, and the worſt Evil that I can fall into. Whilſt I loſe not his Favour, I am ſo happy as to enjoy a Spring of never-failing Joy and Comfort, amidſt all my Sorrows and Sufferings; and while I ſit in Darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a Light unto me. The Good Man patiently enduring, is a Spectacle highly pleaſing to God; and the Holy Angels view him with Delight: When they ſee him in a generous Contempt of this World, bearing his Adverſities without Frowardneſs, or any Dejection of Spirit: And continuing to love God,

God, to truſt in him, and perform diligently, all his Duties, notwithſtanding theſe: This ſhews a brave and generous Love to God, when many Waters cannot quench it, nor the Floods drown it.

When it pleaſes God, I ſhall ſee an happy End of my Afflictions. I can never fall ſo low but he can retrieve me: He bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up again. He will reſtore, if he ſees fit, what I have loſt with Advantage: And can give me another Companion as Kind, and Good, as well accompliſht as ſhe I have loſt; for from him comes every good and perfect Gift: It was from him that ſhe was adorn'd and endow'd with ſo many pleaſant and endearing Qualifications: And beſides this, he may give what he did not before, the Bleſſing of Poſterity too, if he pleaſes.

A fruitful Wife, like a fair Vine,
With Cluſters ſhall abound,
And Children, like green Olive Plants,
My Table ſhall ſurround.

Pſal. 128. Patr. Tranſ.

So well pleas'd we find he was, with the Patience of *Job* under a great Train of Calamities, that he reſtor'd to him with great Advantage, the Enjoyments which he had loſt: His Eſtate was in all reſpects double to

to what he loſt; and he liv'd many years to enjoy it: And for ſeven Sons and three Daughters loſt, he had ſeven Sons and three Daughters given him again; and he ſaw them multiplied into Childrens Children, even to Four Generations. He that loves me does not delight to Afflict or Grieve the Children of Men; much leſs will he needleſly or ſuperfluouſly Chaſtiſe his Servants. If he may then at any time, ſpare his chaſtiſing Rod without doing me more harm therein, he will do ſo. The Pſalmiſt celebrates his goodneſs and gentleneſs in Correcting, in *Pſal.*103. and ſays,

The Lord is kind, and Goodneſs is
His Nature and Delight;
Slow is his wrath, and though he Chides,
Would not deſtroy us quite.

And again,

A Father's Pity to his Child,
Than God's is leſſer far;
For he conſiders our weak Frame,
And knows that Duſt we are.

I may further conſider, and aſſure my ſelf, That Afflictions patiently endur'd, ſhall obtain hereafter a glorious Reward. And I may comfort my ſelf with this expectation, as the Pſalmiſt did in a ſtate of great Affliction, (*Pſal.*16.) and ſay, *There-*

Therefore my Heart and Tongue rejoyce,
In him my Fleſh ſhall truſt;
My Soul ſhall not remain in Hell,
Nor Body in the Duſt.

The Path of Life they both ſhall find,
And in thy preſence taſt,
Pleaſures to full Perfection grown,
And Joys that ever laſt. Patr. Tranſl.

My preſent Loſſes ſhall be my future Gains; my preſent Contempt, my future Honours: And as one ſays,

Tears ſhall take comfort, and turn Gems;
And Wrongs repent to Diadems.

And the more my preſent Sufferings are, the greater ſhall my future Joys and Glory be. I am apt to think my ſelf hardly uſed, and that the Providence of God is more kind, more favourable to others than to me; becauſe I think them much leſs afflicted than my ſelf. When all the while he is only exerciſing and preparing me for the greater degrees of Eternal Glory. He herein gives me opportunity to gain the greater Rewards; and he will aſſiſt me ſo that I ſhall do it if I will. I ſhould always remember, then, and encourage my ſelf with what his Meſſenger has told us from him con-

concerning this matter; That, *theſe light Afflictions which are but for a moment, ſhall work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.*

Conſider the many miſeries and vexations of this mortal Life.

6. It may juſtly moderate our Grief for the Death of thoſe we love, to conſider, the many miſeries and vexations of this mortal Life which our Friends are deliver'd from. We pity them mightily for the good things they are taken from: But if we have a right Eſtimation of thoſe good things, and conſider the Evils mixed with them, we ſhould ſee reaſon rather to Congratulate them, and rejoyce for their Deliverance.

The good things we enjoy, are weak and poor: They have, alas, but a very ſhallow Goodneſs, and the greedy and capacious Mind of Man ſoon exhauſts the utmoſt of it, and then diſdains them. The Objects of our vain Deſires are far better, in our Imagination, than in the Enjoyment; and our great Expectations meet with a very uneaſie Diſappointment. However the thing we gain may tranſport us at firſt, while 'tis a Novelty, yet in a little time it grows much leſs pleaſant, and at laſt, perhaps, diſtaſtful. We want even the Pungency of ſome Evil, to heighten the Reliſh

of theſe Poor Earthly Goods; as Hunger and Thirſt are neceſſary to the Pleaſures of our Meat and Drink: And if any Man had a Fortune perfectly indulgent, and without all Mixture of Affliction, he would be abſolutely ſick of it; and his unmixed, uninterrupted Happineſs would be an Adverſity to him; juſt as a full and ſated Stomach loaths the Hony-Comb. The feeble thing too, alters and decays in uſing: Like Flowers, for a few Moments, gay and ſweet, but ſoon fading and turning to Corruption. One Generation of things, as well as of Men goes, and another comes, while the Earth abides for ever: The Faſhion of this World, the pleaſing Forms of things fade and vaniſh, though the Matter may remain. On which ſad Truth, we have an Elegant Deſcant of *Augurellius* to his Friend, upon the Death of his Siſter.

Peter, *when thou this pleaſant World doſt ſee,*
Believe thou ſeeſt meer Dreams and Vanity:
No real things, but falſe; and through the Air,
Each where an empty ſlippery Scene appear.
The chirping Birds, the freſh Woods ſhady Boughs,
The Leaves ſhrill Whiſpers when the Weſt-wind blows;
The ſwift fierce Grey-hound courſing along the Plains,
The flying Hare diſtreſt 'twixt Fear and Pains:
The bloomy Maid decking with Flowers her Head,
The gladſome eaſie Youth by light Love led:
And whatſoe'er here with admiring Eyes
Thou ſeemſt to ſee, 'tis but a frail Diſguiſe

Worn

Worn by eternal things; a Paſſive Dreſs,
Put on by Beings that are Paſſiveleſs.
Vaughan Flor. Solitud.

To which that ingenious Tranſlator adds, "All the gay Appearances in this Life, "ſeem to me but a ſwift Succeſſion of riſing "Clouds, which neither abide in any cer-"tain Form, nor continue for any long "Time. And this is that which makes the "fore Travel of the Sons of Men, to be no-"thing elſe but a meer chaſing of Shad-"dows. All is but Vanity, ſays the Roy-al Philoſopher. And we may take notice that he adds Vexation of Spirit too, as that which neceſſarily attends the Vanity, and the Diſappointment of our vaſt Expectati-ons therein. Such are the good things which this World affords us; and is it then any great Loſs or Miſery to part with ſuch poor fading Trifles as theſe?

To this we muſt alſo joyn, that we are here ſurrounded with, and expos'd to innu-merable Evils; Man is born to Trouble, and there is commonly a Force and Pungen-cy in the Evils we meet with, which makes them far more ſenſible and affecting than our Pleaſures. Whether of the two, for in-ſtance, has been moſt ſenſible to me, the Enjoyment of this Good I have loſt, or the

loſs of it. If the loſs be moſt ſenſible, then this diſparages the weak Goodneſs of all Earthly Enjoyments, ſince this may be ſaid of the very beſt of them: If the Enjoyment was moſt ſenſible and pleaſing, how comes the Reliſh of it to be all loſt, and the Joy to be quite drown'd, and forgotten in my preſent Grief? Alas, one ſmall Inconvenience can embitter a whole Ocean of theſe weak Delights. Let a Man ſuffer an Acute Pain but in ſome one part of his Body, and it ſhall make him even a weary of his Life, though his Habitation be a ſtately Palace, though his Table too be covered with all the Dainties which the Air, Earth or Sea can afford; and though he be cloathed with the richeſt Silks or Furrs, and adorned with Gold and Diamonds.

The good things we enjoy in this World are for the moſt part with great difficulty obtain'd;

And theſe to our purſuits are Coy,
As they prove vain when we Enjoy:

There are abundance of greedy miſtaken Wretches catching at every thing that falls, and but one perhaps can enjoy it: And ſometimes, in their ſcrambling for it, they ſpoil the thing they are ſo eager for, and do all miſs of it. But the Evils of this Life

Life we are expoſed to; they come of themſelves; they require our Care and Labour to defend our ſelves from them; and we cannot ſo well defend our ſelves, but they will often Afflict us. When we are ſo Ill beſet, there is no Man can be perfectly Happy here. This is the wretched State which my Friend has left: And can this be juſt Matter of immoderate Sorrow. The Poet wiſely ſays,

Some as a thing injurious Death do fly,
When of all Michiefs 'tis the Remedy.

And again,

To this, as a Phyſician, all reſort;
And we through Tempeſts, Sail into this Port.
Æſchyl. in Plut.

Death is the ſafe and quiet Harbour wherein the Weather-beaten Marriner meets a glad End of all his Toils, and Fears, and Dangers. And what wiſe Man can I think, that were near the End of his Days, would, if the renewal of his Life were offer'd him, be contented to go through it all again; to bear the Ignorance and Weakneſs of Infancy, the Fears of Childhood, to be expoſed to the Fatal Dangers of raſh Youth, to endure the weighty Cares of Manhood,

and the weightier Infirmities of Old Age. I believe it may be ſaid, That hardly any Man did ever live a long Life in this World, in ſo much Happineſs, as that he would be willing to repeat it all again juſt as it was: Hardly would any Man endure the Evils he has paſt over for the ſake of the good Things he has enjoy'd. Would I, for inſtance, endure the Grief and Trouble of loſing the Dear Poſſeſſion which I had, for the ſake of the Happineſs and Pleaſure which I took in Poſſeſſing: If ſo, then I have no reaſon for Impatience, ſince the Providence of God has herein favoured me with more Good than Evil: If I would not, I may juſtly diſdain all the Felicity of this World, and then I cannot reaſonably think my Friend greatly hurt in being taken from it.

The Pure and Heaven-born Soul, is in this Life confin'd to an Earthly Carkaſs, which, as the caſe ſtands with us now, is but as a Priſon: A Spirit is ſhackled to Fleſh, and a ſpritely active Being is clogged with a dull Lump of Clay: The Noble Soul it ſelf grows forgetful of its Divine, Original and Noble Capacities; ſuffers it ſelf to be amuſed and detained by ſenſible things, and contracts a Shameful Senſuality and Earthlineſs by her converſing with them. Hence proceed frequent Erroneous Judgments of things,

things, Perverſe and Fooliſh Elections: The Purblind Mind purſues Good at a venture, knows not to direct her ſelf right, and an ill byaſs diverts her from a right Aim. We are apt to prefer Temporal and Senſual Goods before Spiritual and Eternal ones, Earth before Heaven, and to love the Empty Fading Creature, before the Infinite Eternal Fullneſs of God. Hence do we often ignorantly devour pleaſant Poiſons, and madly embrace Gawdy but Conſuming Flames: We ſeek and catch at things which we are blindly inamour'd with, many times, to our own Hurt and Confuſion. But when the Happy Soul is diſingaged from this Body, and no longer importuned and incumbred by that, it is no longer liable to theſe Miſchievous Follies: The Eye of the Mind ſees clearly, it is enlightned with pure and abundant Truth: She ſees her chief Good, and fixes her Choice upon Infinite and Perfect Goodneſs: Her Faculties gladly find their Liberties regain'd, and that they can exert themſelves and act without any Clog or Incumbrance: How many Mean and Vexatious Cares do the Real and Natural Neceſſities of our Frail Body here ſubject us to? What Trouble and Toil does it many times coſt us to ſupply its Wants, to heal its Diſeaſes, to defend its Rights and Conveniences? What a multitude of Diverſions

will these things necessarily give us, from the proper Business of Life, our Glorifying and Serving God, and being useful to the World? And to the best Pleasures of Life, the Exercises of Devotion and Beneficence? Is it not really a Lamentable Thing, that so much precious Time must be spent upon this Vile Body, in Lazy Sleep, and the common Animal Drudgery of Eating and Drinking? If we do not Indulge it with due Meals, with some Recreations and frequent Rest, it will fail us; it will further hinder us in our main Business by Uneasie Distempers. What a Blessed Deliverance, then, has the Departed Soul which has shaken off the Troublesome Burden of this Mortal Flesh, and can now with an unwearied Vigour and Activity, Contemplate and Enjoy the chief Fountain of Bliss, and suffers no Diversion from the most Delightful Enjoyment.

The many Evils to which this Mortal Life is exposed, become yet abundantly more by the Wickedness of Mankind: Their Wickedness makes Mankind Savage, instead of being Comfortable to one another: And there is no sort of wild Beast more Cruel to Men, than are the wilder Lusts and Passions of wicked Men. It was perhaps justly said by one of the Ancients, There have been more Men destroy'd by Men,

Men, than by all other Plagues and Miſchiefs beſide: If a Man has any thing to loſe, he can hardly be quiet: One Man's Covetouſneſs will invade his Riches; another Man's Ambition will incroach upon his Prerogative or Liberty; another Man's ungovern'd Love of Pleaſure, will endeavour to deprive him of his Pleaſant Enjoyments. In what Condition of Life ſoever a Man is placed, he can enjoy no conſtant Reſt or Safety in this wicked World: Thoſe that are exalted in Dignity and Honour, that flouriſh in Proſperity, are continually maligned and undermin'd by the Malice and Envy of meaner People: And thoſe that are Mean, are often Perſecuted and Trampled on by the Oppreſſion and Contempt of them who are High and Mighty: And all the Degrees between both, are ſubject to both theſe ſorts of Miſchiefs; thoſe below will Envy, and thoſe above Deſpiſe and Oppreſs them. The Goodneſs of things here is ſo narrow and limited, that the more one Man has of them, the leſs another muſt poſſeſs: They are not like the Infinite Good of which the greateſt Multitudes may ſhare, and all be compleatly Happy, and all ſatisfied. And, beſides this, the Luſts of Men make their Deſires ſo Exorbitant, that they crave and covet in all Matters more than ſimple Nature needs

needs or requires: Nature is contented with a little, but Luſt and Vice are not ſatisfied with a great deal. From theſe things proceed Strifes and Contentions, Frauds and Rapines, Cruelties and Treacheries: From theſe the Tyranny of Rulers and the Rebellions of Subjects proceed: From theſe come Bloody Wars, and all the large Train of Calamities which they draw after them: Wars that Deſpiſe the Puny Miſchiefs of Private Ruins, and Demoliſh Mighty Cities, make Havock of whole Provinces, and bring Flouriſhing Kingdoms to Miſery and Deſolation. O Miſerable World! Oh the Madneſs of Mankind! With what Reaſon can I greatly Lament that my Dear Friend is removed from ſuch a World as this? Envy will not purſue her beyond the Grave: There is no Temptation to it, when Death has ſtript her of the Honours, or Wealth, or Pleaſant things ſhe enjoy'd. Malice in wicked Men againſt her will now die too: And they who were Enemies, will perhaps let themſelves ſpeak ſomething well of her: As the Poet long ago obſerved.

Againſt the Vertuous Man we all make Head,
And Hate him while Alive, but Praiſe him Dead.

Mimnerm. in Euſeb. Nier. de Art. Volunt.

But

But if their Malice ſhould be ſtill continued it can do her no harm; ſhe is advanced far above the ſhort reach of it: Of the Condition which ſhe is now in is that ſaid, *There the Wicked ceaſe from Troubling, and there the Weary are at Reſt: There the Priſoners reſt together; They hear not the Voice of the Oppreſſor; and the Servant is free from his Maſter,* (Job 3. 17, 18, 19.)

If my loved Friend was in a Proſperous Condition when Death called her away, I cannot be certain that ſhe would always have retained it in this Wicked and Diſorderly and Mutable World: The moſt eſtabliſhed Condition in this Life is liable to Change: Every thing that conſtitutes an Earthly Proſperity is ſubject to Alteration: That my Friends Health and Vigour could alter, this fatal Sickneſs has proved. Riches make themſelves Wings and fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven; irrecoverably they go and out of ſight: And if theſe be gone which procure us the Pleaſures of this World, or Health be decay'd, which muſt give us the Reliſh of them, then is the Pleaſure of Life loſt and gone too: And if it had been her Fortune to have out-lived her Wealth, and become Poor, ſhe would have found her pretended Friends forſake her too: *The Poor is hated by his Neighbour, but the Rich have many Friends,* ſays the Wiſe Man

Man (*Prov.* 14. 1.) Had ſhe been never ſo Great, if ſhe had been a Mighty and Glorious Queen, there is no certainty even in the moſt exalted Dignity and Honour. How eaſie a Revolution does it often prove, and in how little time come to paſs, that the things which are uppermoſt are thrown down, and thoſe below are exalted: That Servants are ſet on Horſe-back, and Princes embrace Dunghills! That he who poſſeſſed a Kingdom, comes to beg a Habitation; and he who ſate on a Throne, dies on a Scaffold. A moſt remarkable Inſtance of the Mutability of Humane Affairs, even when arriv'd at the higheſt Pitch of Greatneſs, the Roman Hiſtory affords us in the Perſon and Fortunes of *Pompey*, Sirnamed the Great; of whom the Eloquent *Cicero*, himſelf too a great Inſtance of the Variety and Inſtability of Fortune, thus ſpeaks, with deep Reſentment of his Misfortunes. "Had this Great Man (ſays he) but died "in Good time, no Evil had invaded him: "But by living to an Old Age, he became "an Example of ſingular and unuſual Ca- "lamity; whoſe Adverſe Fortune was by "ſo much the more Bitter, by how much "the more his Proſperity had been Great "and Glorious through his whole Life "before. For who (ſays he) was ever "more Dear to the Romans than this Man

ſome

" ſome time was? Who ever flouriſh'd in " greater Riches? Had more conſiderable " Relations, Allies, and Friends than he? " Who was ever more Famous in the Gown " by great Deeds done, and by Honours " conferred upon him out of Courſe? He " enjoy'd whatever was neceſſary for his " Uſe and Delight. But undertook a War " againſt his Son-in-Law, forſook his Houſe, " and fled from *Italy:* And having loſt his " Army, his Camp being taken, and he " fled for his Life, this great Man fell and " died by the hands of Servants. Thus far he. Oh wretched Condition of Humane Life! For what is this ſo deſirable, which cannot aſſure us the ſteady Poſſeſſion of any one of the good things which we enjoy! Muſt we not reckon it a Happineſs to be delivered from this Miſerable Uncertainty? And from the Anxieties, Fears and Labours which it condemns us to? This is the Happineſs my Dear Friend has attained: She died in happy Circumſtances, and is delivered from all Fear and Danger of ſeeing ſuch as are Vexatious and Miſerable. Had it pleaſed God to call me away before her, I could not have left her without ſome Solicitude and Concern for her Safety in this Malicious and Uncertain World: Now ſhe is out of all Danger, and I am delivered from that Care. This Argument for our Conſolation

in

in such a Case the Philosopher says, Every vulgar Poet could prescribe. And he quotes one, speaking thus to another upon such an Occasion as this.

If this with Certainty thou couldst have known,
That Fortune always would have Kindness shown,
That nothing else but good would him befall,
His Death thou mightest then untimely call.
But if Calamities were imminent,
And Death the fatal Mischief did prevent;
To give to things the Character that's due,
Death was the greater Kindness of the two.

In this Life, it is a matter of some Difficulty, even to the greatest Saint, to do always what is Brave and Good, or to refrain sometimes from doing what is mean and wicked. He that will steadily follow a wise and regular course of Life, must undergo the troublesome Task of frequently denying himself: He must cross many importunate Inclinations; and it will cost him a great deal of pains to mortifie these, that he may be able upon occasion to over-rule them. In this Life, every Man that will maintain his Innocence, must Conflict with a multitude of Temptations: Some of these will meeet him every where; in all Circumstances and Conditions of Life; in every business; and a numerous mighty Host of

of Dangers theſe are. They require the Chriſtian Champion's moſt induſtrious Watchfulneſs, importunate Prayers to Heaven for Aid, and unwearied Reſiſtance. And between the violent Aſſaults of Temptation from without, and the deceitful Treachery of Corruption within, O how hard a matter is it for us to maintain an unſullied Innocence! But if a Man yields to theſe ſeducing Enemies, he is led Captive by fooliſh and hurtful Paſſions and Vices, into Errors and Follies and Sins innumerable. He brings upon himſelf it may be, many outward inconveniencies, the fruits of his Wickedneſs; ſuch as Reproach, Diſgrace, Poverty, Sickneſs, or Civil Puniſhment: He is unavoidably expoſed to the torments of a guilty Mind; and his own Conſcience will often ſeverely rebuke and puniſh him for his Crimes. Beſides, he becomes obnoxious to the Wrath of Almighty God, and muſt be liable to the Dread and Terrours of Everlaſting Puniſhment. Oh how happy a thing is it, then, to be for ever out of the reach of Temptation! to be deliver'd from the ſolicitations of Corruption, and ſo to be out of the danger of Sin; to be free from the Cares and Labours of keeping our ſelves free from that; and to be no more expoſed to the miſerable Conſequences which unavoidably will attend

our

our doing Evil! And this is the happy Condition now of my departed Pious Friend.

Theſe are the great Diſparagements of this preſent wretched Life; and I might juſtly be even glad to think, that ſhe whom I loved is delivered from them all. She is gone from the tempeſtuous Sea of this World, and landed at the Port of Safety and Reſt: She now looks back with Joy and Satisfaction upon the ſtormy Evil World which ſhe is eſcaped from: And if ſhe thinks of me, it is with Compaſſion and Pity for that I am ſtill here expoſed to all theſe Vexations and Miſchiefs: She is ſtill ſo kind as to wiſh that I were in the ſame Safety and Tranquility with her; I muſt not then be ſo unkind to her, as to wiſh that ſhe were here ſtill amidſt the Dangers and Troubles of this World. My departed Friend is in a ſtate of perfect Reſt: The Tranquility and Repoſe of her Condition ought to reſtrain me from caſting away the Tranquility of my Mind, by immoderate Paſſion for her Departure: And it is not fit that I ſhould be troubled overmuch for that which ſets her out of the reach of all trouble. Let me conſider her comfortable Deliverance then, and ſo Comfort my ſelf in her Departure, if indeed I do ſtill Love her. The Holy Scripture propoſes this Conſideration to allay our Sorrow. And ſays,

Bleſt

Bleſt are the Dead who in the Lord depart,
From henceforth Bleſſed write them down;
Fear of the Pains and Labours known,
They never more ſhall feel the irkſome ſmart.

The Spirit ſays, they are to joyful Reſt,
From all their earthly Toils remov'd;
And their pure Works, by God approv'd,
Follow them cloſe, and are in Bliſs poſſeſt.

Conſider the happy State to which good Souls are advanc'd at their Death.

Laſtly: To moderate our Grief for the Death of thoſe that are Dear to us, we may conſider, the happy bliſsful State to which the Souls of all good and virtuous Perſons are advanced, when they quit their mortal Bodies, and this miſerable Life. Say then to your ſelf theſe comfortable things:

My deceaſed Friend is only departed from me for a while, ſhe is not loſt, not annihilated. From that Moment in which a Man is conceiv'd, and ſo forward through all Eternity, he ſhall never ceaſe to be. Her Body is laid in the Duſt, to reſt in the quiet Grave, and is there watcht by the careful Eye of divine Omniſcience. And whereſoever any Parts of that may happen in Ages to come to be ſcatter'd, the Divine Power will certainly collect them all again, and

ſhe ſhall be perfectly reſtor'd to Being and Happineſs.

But the mean while her better Part, the noble Soul, is return'd to God that gave it: And ſince ſo much of her ſtill lives, I may ſay, ſhe is gone to her Celeſtial Kindred. Upon her Departure from the Body, I may believe ſhe immediately found her ſelf, like the Soul of good *Lazarus*, attended by kind and glorious Angels: And they, I muſt needs think, are not ſilent at their meeting her. They congratulate her Delivery from this World, applaud her Patience in ſuffering the Evils of it, her Diligence in doing good, her bold Conflicts againſt the Aſſaults of many Temptations, and her Perſeverance to the End of her Life. I may ſuppoſe them giving her Comfort and Aſſurance, and chaſing away all thoſe Fears which might be apt to invade her upon her Entrance on an unknown and untried State. They ſufficiently convince her without Doubt, that ſhe is amongſt her Friends, and bring her, 'tis likely, a very kind Meſſage and Invitation from Jeſus, the Lover of Souls, and King of Heaven. They tell her of a Bliſsful, Glorious Place ſhe ſhall be carried to, that they will bring her to the Celeſtial Paradice; where the Prophets and Apoſtles, Martyrs and Confeſſors are: All the greateſt Favourites of Heaven,

and

and all the departed Souls of Pious Men dwell in perpetual Eaſe and Felicity. They let her know ſhe ſhall ſee the loving Jeſus in all his Glory, ſhe ſhall dwell with him for ever, and ſhall partake of his Glory and Happineſs.

Inflam'd with theſe joyful Reports, and now ſufficiently encouraged, ſhe is in haſte to be gone, and to ſee what they tell her of. And ſhe is conveyed to Paradiſe, with a Motion ſo ſwift as nothing in Nature can equal it; quick enough ſhe goes to ſatisfie even her own eager Deſire: This Day, ſaid the kind Jeſus to a dying Penitent, thou ſhalt be with me in Paradice; when the Day was already far ſpent, and drawing towards a Concluſion: Soon then ſhe arrives in that bleſſed Paradiſe, and is there graciouſly receiv'd by the loving Jeſus, and all the happy Company of Saints rejoyce at her coming: And what it is which ſhe there ſees, what ſhe hears, and what ſhe feels, ſhe her ſelf could not tell us if ſhe ſhould return again; and if ſhe could tell, we could not, with all her telling, conceive it. The excellent St. *Paul*, who had the Favour to be rapt up thither, declared, that what he was there made ſenſible of, was unutterable things, ſuch as were impoſſible to be ſpoken.

If I could look into the Celeſtial Temple, I might ſee her there, in Tranſports of Joy, ſurrounded with a Glorious Ring of Rejoycing Spirits, all engaged in the thankful Praiſes of him whom they love, and him who loves them for ever. Love and Sympathy with the Heavenly Quires, if indeed I am a free Denizon of the *Jeruſalem* above, ſhould make me rejoyce at ſuch a Thought, with them that do rejoyce there. How unſuitable is it that I ſhould immoderately grieve for the Death of her whom I lov'd, when ſhe is gone to inhabit a Joy unſpeakable and glorious: While I am mourning for her Death, ſhe is giving Thanks for it; ſhe is overjoy'd to think that it is over with her, and ſhe has finiſh'd that her laſt and worſt Conflict with the Enemy of her Salvation. How happy ſoever her Condition was on Earth, it is much happier now, and in perfect Reſt and Security ſhe enjoys her Happineſs. The Place and Condition ſhe is in, are repreſented in the Divine Writings, by all that is great, pleaſant, and glorious in this World; but we are alſo told there, that all theſe Repreſentations fall ſhort of it. I cannot know then, how happy ſhe is, till I go to ſee; and that muſt be now the Care that engages me. With all my Sorrow, with all my vain Wiſhes, I cannot bring her back

again from thence, and I ſhould do her the greateſt Diskindneſs if I could: I muſt then, if I am truly ſorry to have parted with her, be earneſtly concern'd to meet her again, as ſoon as it ſhall pleaſe God to give me leave to go hence too. If I ſteadily perſevere in the Paths of Piety and Virtue which ſhe kept, I ſhall not fail to come to the ſame happy End.

That I may do ſo, I do reſolve, and will endeavour to be diligent in the Duties which the Great Sovereign of the World now gives me to do; I will ſet my ſelf, to bear, with due Patience, the Afflictions that ſhall exerciſe me: I will earneſtly concern my ſelf to ſerve and promote the Glory of God among Men, and to do all the good Offices to the World that I can: And I will, as often as I think of this lov'd Perſon who is gone before, excite my ſelf to theſe things, in Conſideration that this Courſe will bring me to dwell with her again. Thus I may make ſome Advantage of my Loſs, and derive ſome Benefit from my Affliction.

And if I make ſuch Reſolutions as theſe, and perform them; then I may promiſe my ſelf, in a little time, to ſee her, who is now gone from me, again. I ſhall meet her where the Spirits of Juſt Men are made perfect: Where all irregular Paſſions are perfectly

perfectly removed; where we shall never in the least misunderstand, never conceive the least displeasure against one another. Where we shall love again too, and that with an Affection more pure and more ardent than before. Where both of us shall be more happy than ever we could be here: We shall have no Griefs to communicate, no Complaints to make to one another: No Burdens or Cares to divide between us, nothing to allay our Happiness, or damp our ravishing Joy: Where we both shall always please God, always enjoy the Expressions of his Favour; and mutually rejoyce with a redoubled Joy; each of us for our own Happiness, and for the Happiness of each other. We shall meet and dwell together; no Distance of Place shall part us there, or hinder our delightful Communion with one another: We shall be of one Family, in one sacred Temple, and in one rejoycing Quire; joyning to pay eternal Adorations, and thankful Praises to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We shall never be parted again, through the whole Duration of Eternity.

Within a little while this happy meeting may be: It cannot be far off, since it will come at the End of this short Life. This then shall often entertain my Thoughts, and be my greatest Comfort instead

ſtead of her that is gone from me: That after the Labours and Patience of a few Days more, a long Night of Reſt to my wearied Body ſhall come: And my freed Soul ſhall fly away from this low, wretched, mortal World, to the Regions of Happineſs and Glory: And there enjoy Jeſus the King of Loves, this loving Soul now gone before me, and an innumerable Multitude of happy, glorious, and immortal Lovers and Friends. *Amen.*

The

The Departing Soul.

Death does his Efforts on the Body ſpend;
There they rude Havock make, but there they End.
No Harm from all the Deathleſs Soul receives,
But in ſound Health ſhe her craz'd Dwelling leaves;
When with Aſpiring Wings of Heavenly Love,
Thus freed, ſhe Soars to the bright Regions above.

Kind Angels, her Celeſtial Kindred, come
To Guide, and to Accompany her Home.
With Pleaſing talk they ſooth their tired Gueſt,
And promiſe her henceforth a Bliſsful Reſt:
They tell her ſhe ſhall now repeat no more,
The Griefs, nor Toils, ſo often born before.
Her Tears ſhall Comfort her, and turn to Gems,
And all her Wrongs repent to Diadems.
They bid her Earths poor Joys ſhe leaves behind
Contemn; as now for Heav'ns rich Bliſs deſign'd.

They Praiſe the Glories of the Land of Light,
To which ſhe ſhall advance with haſty Flight.
Where Joys unmix'd, and Pleaſures that abide,
And Pureſt Love, and Calmeſt Peace Reſide.

There Confeſſors their Joyful Hopes poſſeſs;
And Martyrs Triumph in exalted Bliſs.
Theſe the Vile Reffuſe of the World were deem'd,
But with wiſe Heav'n moſt highly are eſteem'd.
Through Gloomy Suff'rings, and with Weeping Eyes,
They found the narrow Way to Paradiſe.

Their

Their Sacred Maſter's Laws they did revere,
And ſuch a Guide to follow would not fear.
His ſhameful Croſs with Patience they ſuſtain'd;
And thus at length his Crown and Glory gain'd.
The Prophets there with Em'nent Glory ſhine,
And brave Apoſtles, who with Zeal Divine
Inſpir'd, the Righteous of Wiſdom taught,
And many, many Souls to Bliſs have brought.
With Joy they ſee their Labours good Succeſs;
And, with their own, enjoy their Convert's Happineſs.
Theſe multiply the Glories of their Crown,
And fill the ſpacious Heavens with their Renown.
Of ev'ry Age and Nation ſome there be,
And ev'ry Tongue, who there in one agree,
A Numerous, Joyful, Glorious Company.

There Pious Souls, whom Love had joyn'd below,
Meet, and in Bliſs are joyn'd for ever now.
In happy Partnerſhip of Joys they live,
And never for each other more ſhall Grieve.
There no Misfortune, no Miſtake ſhall prove
Injurious to their Mutual Joy or Love.
No Cruel Abſcence more ſhall them divide,
But in each other Bleſs'd they do Eternally abide;
In one another more than ever Bleſs'd,
As now in Merit, and in Love increas'd.

Angels that view the Radiant Face *of Love,*
And thence their Glory and their Love improve.
With their bright Preſence often will increaſe
The Glory there, and with their Love the Bliſs.
Theſe, skilful in the pleaſant Art of Praiſe,
Teach the glad Saints with more Delight their Songs to raiſe.

But, more to her Delight, they largely ſing
The Loves and Glories of the Heav'nly King!

Jeſus,

Jeſus, the Prince of Loves, they Celebrate,
And tell her of her Friend's Exalted State!
How he aloft enthron'd at God's right Hand,
Has all that is in Heaven at his Command!
They ſtrive to tell how kindly he receives
Pure Souls, and what his wond'rous Bounty gives!
Of bleſs'd Abodes they ſing, and laſting Day,
Adorn'd with this Bright Sun's Eternal Ray!
Of Glorious Crowns beſtow'd, and Robes of Light,
And Favours Numberleſs, that yield unſpeakable Delight.

He her Arrival waits, they ſay, to prove
To her the Bounties of his Royal Love.

With theſe Reports they Charm her Doubtful Fears,
And ſhe his Glory learns, and Love, by theirs.
Ardent to ſee, ſhe'll now no longer ſtay,
But her Conductor's Truſts and Wings away;
To Heaven advancing, and ſo ſwift they fly,
As with her fierce Deſire does now comply.
Where come, ſhe finds the Bliſsful Glory more,
Than, even, experienc'd Angels told before.

Round her amaz'd, ſhe caſts her greedy Eye,
And Beauty meets in all and Harmony:
Delightful Wonders ev'ry where beholds,
And Pleaſure feels which never can be told.

Bright Souls in numerous Throngs approach to ſee,
And welcome her to their bleſs'd Company.
Whoſe coming adds freſh matter to their Joy,
And does a whole Choires thankful Songs employ.
And Glorious Seraphim Congratulate
Her ſafe Arrival to this Happy State.
Grateful to all, ſhe her Advancement ſees,
Which adds to her own Joy with vaſt increaſe.

While

While to Heav'ns King ſhe low Obeiſance makes,
And from him a bright Crown of Glory takes.
Bleſs'd Partner of my Yoke and Croſs (ſays he)
Thou Partner of thy Maſter's Joy ſhalt be.
On Earth with Pious Cares, and Labours preſt,
Enjoy thou, here, an Everlaſting Reſt.
No Danger ſhall thy Happy Reſt annoy,
Nor Trouble interrupt thy laſting Joy.
With us thou ſhalt abide for ever now,
Ever poſſeſs'd of all that we beſtow.
And for thy Body, let no Anxious Fear
Diſquiet thee, for that ſhall be our Care;
Out of Harms reach it does ſecurely ſleep,
And we will every precious Attom keep:
Till by our Pow'r awak'd it ſhall revive,
With us in Immortality to live.
And from the homely Duſt advanc'd, ſhall ſhine
With Beauties and Perfections all Divine.

Thus, in kind Language he his Love doth dreſs;
And Infinitely more in Looks expreſs.

Tranſported then, ſhe ſtrives in Rapturous Strains,
Her great Celeſtial Lovers worthy Praiſe,
High as ſhe can, with ſinging Choires to raiſe:
And in Eternal Extaſie of Joy remains.

Be pleaſed, Sir, to accept this ſmall Teſtimony of my Affections and Reſpects; and permit me to ſubſcribe,

S I R,

Your Affectionate and Humble Servant

T. D.

London,
Feb. 13. 169$\frac{4}{5}$.

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